TRUE WEST

ALL TRUE — ALL FACT — STORIES OF THE REAL WEST
FEBRUARY, 1959 - 25c

Jim Bridger, King of Mountain Men
By NORMAN B. WILTSEY

★

Not the Will of God
By J. FRANK DOBIE

★

Longrope's Last Guard

★

"HALF BEAR—HALF MAN!"

★

Hot-Iron Killer

Choctaw Execution

★

Gauntlet Gloves

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Lost Cement Mine

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Ostrich Stampede

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January-February, 1959
Volume 6, No. 3
Whole No. 31

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."—Walter Prescott Webb, President, American Historical Association for 1958.

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A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

TRUE WEST is published bi-monthly by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, P.O. Box 5008, 709 West 19th St., Austin 31, Texas. 25c per copy, $3.00 for 12 issues in the United States and Possessions. $3.75 for 12 issues in Canada and all other countries. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Austin, Texas, April 22, 1953, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Denver, Colorado. Copyright 1958, by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS.

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True West

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We Told A Durned Fib!

AND this is a *true* western magazine! But we didn't "go" to do it! By golly, we've already washed our mouth out with a cob and we're feeling as shy and guilty as an egg-sucking hound caught in the act!

What did we do? In "Coming Up!" on page 1 of our November-December issue we told you what would appear in the January-February issue. Well, it ain't—not a single article we mentioned! We're flat moving the January-February contents over to the March-April issue. That's the issue when we go NATIONWIDE ON THE NEWSSTANDS. We've been distributing only west of the Mississippi in the past.

Now grab your gavel and be the judge. I'm going to tell you *why*.

This is the biggest step we've made in twenty years of publishing. A big distributing company in New York says we have the best covers of any magazine of our general type and we publish the only two "different" magazines in America. They want 150,000 copies of TRUE WEST and 150,000 copies of FRONTIER TIMES for national distribution. It's a gamble, for Easterners do not know our magazines very well—but we're going to gamble. It's about time those Easterners found out more about WHAT THE WEST *REALLY* WAS LIKE! Don't you agree? You ought to talk with some of them and listen to the distorted picture many have. If we can just make a good enough sale on the newsstands for the first six months so we can keep both magazines going to the East, maybe those folks will become regular readers. Honestly, most Easterners think of a "western" as low grade—the very word itself brings a connotation of trashy literature. WE'RE TRYING TO CHANGE THAT PICTURE! It's a hard job and any help you can give us, like writing Eastern friends to pass the word around, etc., will sure help.

Well, anyhow, first impressions are the ones that seem to last. WE WANT TO COME OUT WITH OUR BEST FOOT FIRST! I've been working on our ALL STAR ISSUE for six months—selecting the very best material we have. It was to be the January-February issue. But since this big, new, important step has come up (too late for the January-February issue) we decided to do something about it fast.

All right, I think we have bruised two stones with one bird. In the first place, we got behind. The whole blamed office force came down with the flu. It was awful. I'm just getting up from a rough siege of it. By durn, if they ever discover a sure preventive for colds and flu, I'm going to work an extra hour a day and take whatever profit I make out of that extra endeavor and spend it all on this preventive! I'm going to stir a little in my coffee in the morning, mix some of it with my potatoes at noon, squirt a shot or two in my highball before supper, and drop a little into a glass of milk that I might drink before going to bed! Talk about something getting you down and flat wallering you in the dust—Old Man Flu is a hard critter to deal with!

BUT a bad predicament can sometimes work out to be a good thing. The letters CONTINUE to flood in wanting copies of Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Many ask to reprint some of the best articles if we can't reprint all three of the first issues. So that's what we're doing in this issue—reprinting the cream of the crop from the first three issues. AND, for those very few among us who hung onto the first three issues, or even read them, we're including a full quarter's worth of new stories so that nobody will "go hungry" after reading this issue! This is the biggest contents we've crammed in any issue in three years—more articles, less advertising. Pulling those articles was quick and easy. What with the flu getting us way behind, if we hadn't done this, we'd have come out way late with that March-April issue also, and THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN DISASTROUS!

Tell us what you think about it. Also, keep writing in those letters about that *authentic* TV show we want to create. We have Hollywood interested and stacks of your letters might show them the way. This was mentioned on page 3 of the September-October, 1958, issue.

Now, boys, I want to call your attention to our LAST CALL on the inside back cover for gift subscriptions. If you didn't get some on your Christmas shopping list, it isn't too late yet to take advantage of these special rates, and the offer will expire with this issue. You're helping us, your friends and yourself. It is our ONLY WAY to reach thou-

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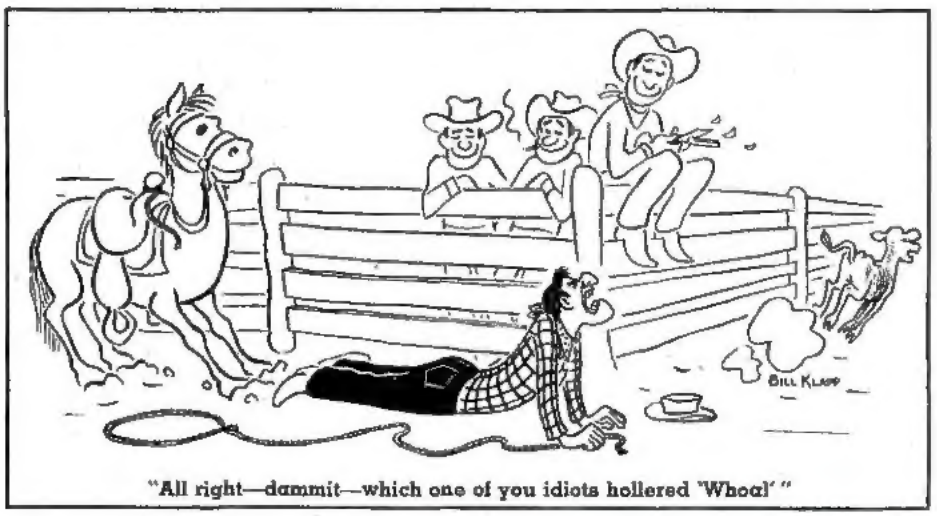

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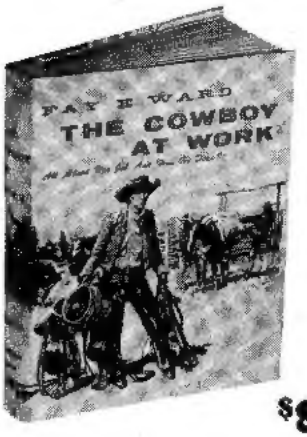

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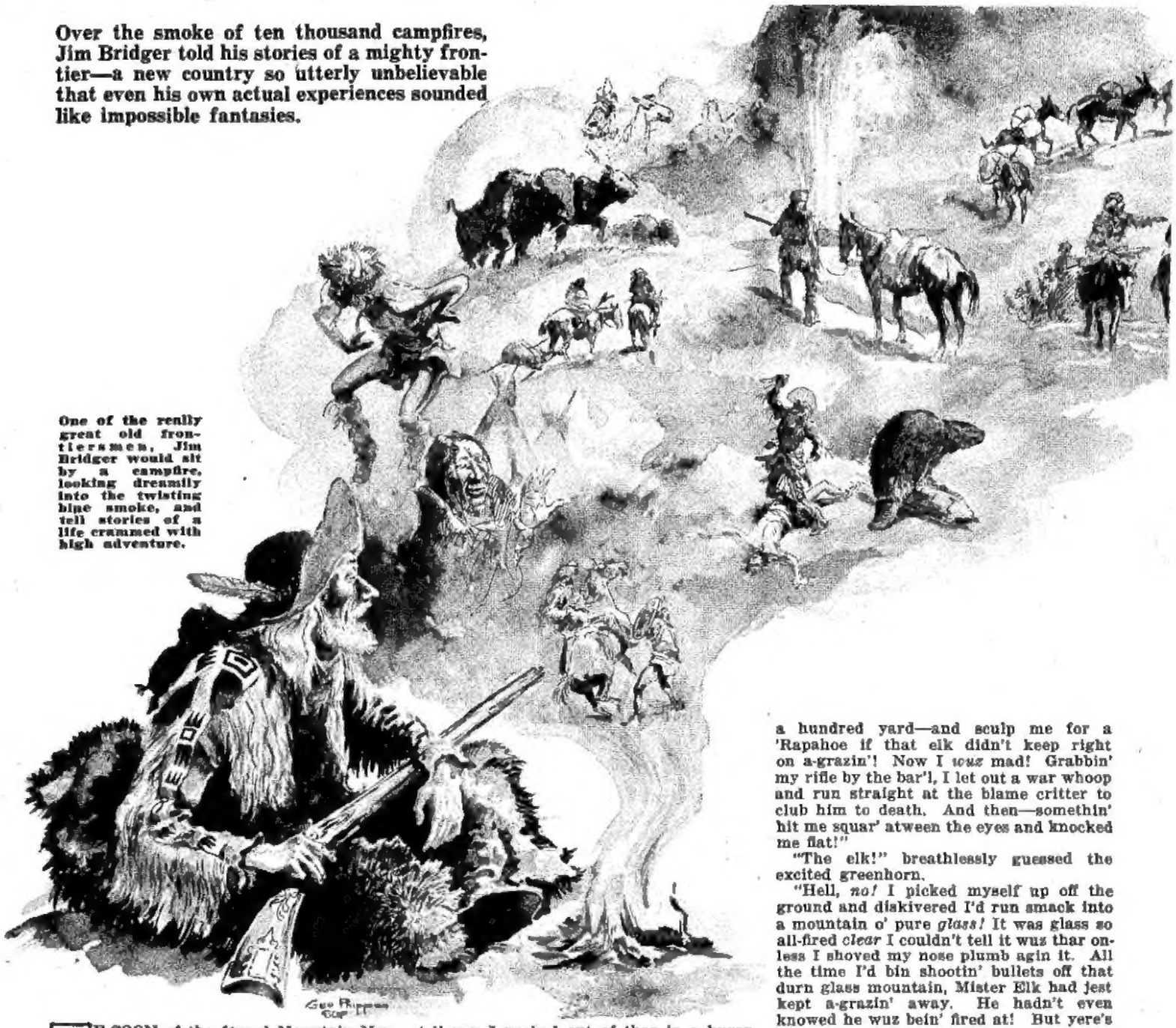
Over the smoke of ten thousand campfires, Jim Bridger told his stories of a mighty frontier—a new country so utterly unbelievable that even his own actual experiences sounded like impossible fantasies.



One of the really great old frontiersmen, Jim Bridger would sit by a campfire, looking dreamily into the twisting pipe smoke, and tell stories of a life crammed with high adventure.

HE-COON of the famed Mountain Men of the old West, Jim Bridger was unchallenged even by Kit Carson himself. No veteran *hivernant* in all the hardy, roistering brotherhood of free trappers could make Injuns and beaver "come" like Jim Bridger; nobody could spin a taller yarn at Rendezvous campfires than he.

"I mind one summer up in the Crow country," Bridger would lead off solemnly over a feast of roasted stuffed buffalo *boudins* and sizzling hump ribs, "I was out meat huntin' and run onto this yere valley that had been cursed long ago by a great medicine man of the tribe. Everything in that valley wuz petrified: deer, elk, b'ar, birds—*everything!* The trees and grass and flowers wuz standin' thar jest the way they wuz a hundred year ago when the medicine man put the curse on 'em. I swang my axe agin' a tree and broke off a hunk of the blade. I spotted a grouse a-sittin' on a pine branch over my head and drew a bead on it to git supper meat. Boys, I shot that grouse's head off—and found it wuz *stone!* I kin tell you I pushed out of thar in a hurry and moved on over the next ridge."

Here the crafty narrator would pause. Invariably, some awed greenhorn, fresh out from St. Louis, came up with the expected: "What happened *then*, Jim?"

"Wal," Bridger would continue, deftly meeting opportunity head-on, "right off I seed this yere big elk standin' broadside to me 'bout two hundred yard away. I threw down on him with my rifle and fired, but he never jumped nor flapped an ear—jest went on a-grazin' in that purty mountain meadow ez if I waren't shootin' at him at all! Now that seemed a mite onreasonable to me—missin' an elk broadside at two hundred yard. Figgerin' mebbe I'd shot high, I reloaded and sneaked up forty-fifty yard closer. This time I held low and careful right behind that elk's left shoulder and squeezed off the ol' Hawken smooth and easy. Again nuthin' happened! Wal, boys, by now I wuz plumb flabbergasted. Yere wuz this fine big elk jest beggin' to be dropped—and I couldn't sink a ball into him no way. I tried a third shot at a hundred yard—and sculp me for a 'Rapahoe if that elk didn't keep right on a-grazin'! Now I *wuz* mad! Grabbin' my rifle by the bar'l, I let out a war whoop and run straight at the blame critter to club him to death. And then—somethin' hit me squar' atween the eyes and knocked me flat!"

"The elk!" breathlessly guessed the excited greenhorn.

"Hell, *no!* I picked myself up off the ground and diskivered I'd run smack into a mountain o' pure *glass!* It was glass so all-fired *clear* I couldn't tell it wuz thar onless I shoved my nose plumb agin it. All the time I'd bin shootin' bullets off that durn glass mountain, Mister Elk had jest kept a-grazin' away. He hadn't even knowed he wuz bein' fired at! But yere's the real *amazin'* part of it . . . "

At this highly dramatic point of his yarn, Jim would pause to stoke his boilers with another foot or two of piping-hot buffalo sausage and thereby allow the entranced greenhorn to step helplessly into the deadly punch-line.

"What was *that*, Jim?"

"Wal, son," replied Bridger, reaching for the long-stemmed Indian pipe that hung in a buckskin case from his left shoulder, "that glass mountain wuz shaped so durn cu'rous it made a perfect telescope. All the time I wuz stalkin' that damn elk and figgerin' him within easy shootin' range, he wuz ackshally more'n *twenty mile away!*"

OVER the fifty-year span of his Western travels (1822-1871), Jim Bridger explored more previously unknown country than any other white man of his century. He roamed the Rocky Mountains from end to end and side to side and back again. He skirted the towering, frosty peaks of the Grand Tetons and penetrated the grim, dark bastion of the Big Horns

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Jim Bridger
KING OF MOUNTAIN MEN

By NORMAN B. WILTSEY

Illustrated by Geo. Phippen

which guarded the matchless hunting grounds of the Sioux. He trapped beaver along crystal mountain streams, camped beside deep, still mountain lakes, until that moment unseen by any save Indian eyes. He shot grizzlies, elk and mule deer on the timbered Western slopes of the Continental Divide, killed antelope and buffalo on the vast rolling Plains.

In the colorful vernacular of the Mountain Men, wherever his "stick floated"—there Jim went. Prowling the Wind River and Sweetwater Mountains with "Bad Hand" Tom Fitzpatrick in 1823, Bridger discovered South Pass—that famous notch between the looming ranges where, in later years, toiled the covered wagon trains of the stubborn pioneers on the long haul westward over the Oregon Trail.

Another time, Jim drifted alone down Bear River in a bull boat constructed of fresh buffalo hides stretched taut over green willow hoops. Reaching a broad expanse of water that proved salty to his taste, Bridger stripped off his greasy buckskins and plunged in for a cooling swim. He found to his amazement that he could sit upright in the buoyant brine without being forced to move his arms and legs to stay afloat. He'd found Great Salt Lake—though he didn't realize that fact until much later. Paddling luxuriously about offshore, Jim decided that he had come upon an arm of the Pacific Ocean!

Bridger's boldest ramble took him far North into Canada—"jest a-follerin' the North Star." Hitting the Mackenzie River at Great Slave Lake, Jim followed the mighty "River of the North" clear down to the Arctic Ocean before turning reluctantly toward home. Eighteen months on the trail—"without sightin' ary white man nor onct tastin' bread"—the wolf-gaunt wanderer returned to his favorite stamping ground along the Tongue River near its junction with the Yellowstone. For once the great explorer's itching feet were bruised and sore—his incurable wanderlust temporarily satisfied.

SUBSEQUENT rovings took the Mountain Man through "Colter's Hell," (present-day Yellowstone Park) where he spent two months in solitary delight enjoying the dreamlike wonders of Nature. When Jim showed up at Rendezvous that summer to trade beaver for powder and ball and "possibles," nobody believed the rare tales he had to tell. Jim mentioned casually immense boiling springs, "fountains" that jumped out of the ground; higher than a pine tree every minute or two, and a mysterious river that somehow divided its current in a high pass to flow in two different directions and toward two oceans . . .

The boys, whooping it up around the blazing campfires, roared appreciatively at this whopper. Joyously they proclaimed Jim the best liar in camp for his "river that flowed two ways t'onct." Why, even loony John Colter had never spun such an ol' fuzzy as that!

Bridger, a victim of his own lurid reputation as a spinner of tall tales, philosophically accepted the situation and proceeded to embroider the story of his Yellowstone adventures with wildly fanciful details of steaming waterfalls a thousand feet high, huge two-headed grizzly bears and nine-foot white Indians with single eyes exactly in the center of their foreheads! Why, one o' them double-headed b'ars had taken out after him and if it hadn't got mixed up at a fork in the trail, trying to foller both paths t'onct, ol' Jim would been a gone beaver for sure!

No doubt about it, that Rendezvous was a hilarious success and one that was long remembered by the free trappers.

Today, unique Two Ocean Pass ranks with the geysers and boiling springs as a major tourist attraction of Yellowstone Park. Fittingly, if belatedly, a small but lovely lake near the Pass has been named Bridger's Lake in honor of Jim.

JIM BRIDGER knew the Indians as no other man of his race was ever to know them. He learned their languages, respected their customs and religions, admired their desperate, hopeless struggle to defend their ancestral hunting grounds and sacred mountains from the steadily encroaching whites. Yet, with clear, objective logic, Jim saw that the Indian's ancient way of life was doomed. The beaver was also doomed. That knowledge spurred Jim into piling up a healthy stake for the future while he could.

At all times, whenever possible, Bridger carefully avoided trouble with the Indians. His luck held out for years until, on a trapping trip deep into the forbidden mountain stronghold of the Blackfeet, Jim received the only serious wound he ever suffered—a Blackfoot arrow shot into his back. He carried the three-inch iron arrowhead in his body for three years. At the Green River Rendezvous of 1835, the missionary-doctor, Marcus Whitman, removed the arrowhead in a difficult and painful operation. The surgery was performed without benefit of anesthesia except for a mug of "Taos lightning" (trade-whiskey) administered to the patient at the start. A mouth-sized chunk of seasoned hardwood was also provided for Jim to bite on when the doctor's scalpel dug deeply. The arrowhead was located with the point penetrating a large bone, bent like a fish-hook and encased in cartilage.

Indians, watching Whitman work on the stoical trapper, were greatly impressed with Bridger's unflinching courage. One pockmarked brave grunted in approval when Jim's excruciating ordeal was over, and exclaimed in the Blackfoot tongue: *"Hai!* The white man is a warrior. His heart is big—like a Blackfoot's!"

Bridger spat out his well-chawed hardwood chunk and snarled at the Blackfoot in his own language: "I spit at you, Ugly Face—*so!* Two of you dog-eaters already have died in payment for this wound—and the score is not yet even!"

Actually, the Crows and Shoshones were the only Indians Bridger ever liked and trusted, claiming that they were "durned near white" in everything but the color of their skins. Jim's good friend, Chief Washakie of the Shoshones, privately doubted the value of the compliment, but tactfully kept his opinion to himself.

Sometimes for months at a stretch Bridger lived "pure Injun" with the Crows or Shoshones, shooting buffalo with the hunters, fighting beside the warriors against raiding Sioux or Blackfeet, and kicking high and whooping savagely in the victory dances around the village fires after driving off the horse-stealing invaders. "Real fancy doin's!" was Jim's enthusiastic description of life among the Indians. "Sets a man up till he's ready to spit in the eye of the first grizzly he meets in the trail!"

WHEN the beaver creeks petered out in 1843, Bridger astutely turned trader and built a post on Black Fork of the Green River in what is now southwestern Wyoming. The post—soon to be known as Bridger's Fort—was ideally situated on the Oregon Trail, and near the Mormon Trail to Salt Lake. The North and South Platte wagon routes met near Fort Bridger, making the post a convenient meeting place for Plains travelers.

Jim and his shrewd Mexican partner, Louis Vasquez, made money at Fort Bridger selling horses and supplies to the emigrants and trading for robes and furs with the Indians. In 1851, visiting his boyhood home in St. Louis, Jim took along a load of fine furs and sold them for $40,000. He bought a farm at Little Santa Fe, Missouri, with part of his share of the money and hotfooted it back West. Later, when Fort Bridger was raided and burned by the Mormons in 1854, Jim settled his Shoshone wife and growing family on the farm.

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The Mormon raid, ostensibly staged in retaliation for Bridger's selling of arms and ammunition to the Indians, ruined Jim financially. The fruits of eleven years of hard work were reduced to smoldering ashes in three hours. Livestock, merchandise, furs, buckskins and buffalo robes all disappeared for a total loss to the partners of more than $200,000.

Jim appealed at once to Washington with an urgent request that the Government take immediate and drastic action against Brigham Young, leader of the Mormons. Nothing came of this wrathful demand, however, and Bridger rode over to Fort Laramie to discuss the matter with the Army officers there. The CO cooled off the seething frontiersman by promising to write personally to Washington corroborating Jim's story of the raid. Whether or not he actually wrote such a letter isn't known, but at least the CO qualified as a diplomat.

While at Laramie, Bridger accepted an excellent offer to guide Sir George Gore, wealthy Irish nobleman touring the West, on a grand-scale hunt through the Yellowstone country to the mouth of Tongue River. Jovial Sir George was just the medicine Jim needed to take his mind off his troubles. Gore had brought along plenty of potent Irish whiskey from his County Sligo castle, and enjoyed sharing a nip or two with his guide around the campfire in the frosty evenings on the high Plains. The nobleman's impressive retinue was composed of "forty men, 112 horses, twelve yoke of oxen, fourteen dogs, six wagons and twenty-one carts." Sir George and his forty game executioners were all armed with heavy sporting rifles made by noted English gunsmiths Richards and Manton, and they kept the weapons hot from morning till night in a valiant attempt to exterminate all wildlife on the Plains.

BRIDGER certainly could use the high wages paid him by Sir George, and he duly appreciated the nobleman's fine whiskey. Soon, however, he got to feeling squeamish about the hunting party's ruthless game slaughtering.

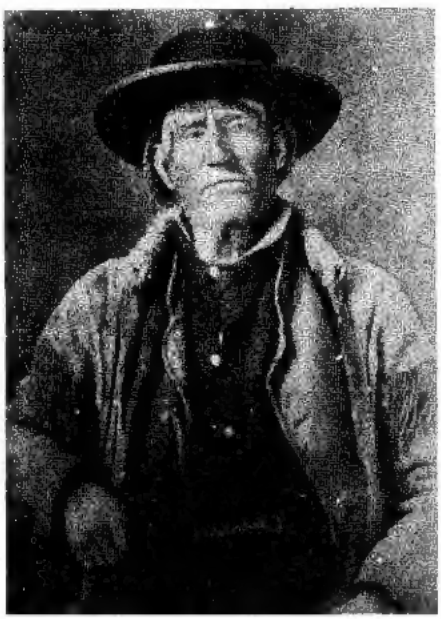
"I got plumb sick o' killin'," admitted Jim after the trip. "Forty guns a-blazin' and a-barkin' from sunup to sundown, 'till the ground wuz fair covered with dead and dyin' critters. We shot hundreds o' buffler for nuthin' but the hides, tongues, hump and backstrap—and left the rest o' the meat to the coyotes. Seemed like Sir George wanted spec'mens of everythin' that flew or crawled or run—and we got 'em all! I ain't never seed so much blood and guts at one time ez I seed that summer. *Wagh*—turned my stummick fair inside out jest to smell the awful stink!"

The Gore party wintered on the Tongue, continuing their murderous barrage on all species of game whenever weather permitted. The Government stepped in finally to stop the frightful butchery, and Sir George and his merry marksmen packed their trophies and expensive guns and departed for St. Louis in a considerable huff. Jim Bridger wasn't sorry to see them go.

Contemporary records modestly credit the noble sportsman and his trigger-happy henchmen with killing 2500 buffalo, forty grizzlies, and "uncounted" elk, deer, antelope and other "small" game. No wonder that even Jim Bridger's cast-iron stomach revolted at the "awful stink!"

Still fuming over his ruination at the hands of Brigham Young's "Destroying Angels," Jim used some of the money paid him by Sir George to journey to Washington and present his case personally to President Buchanan. He got the usual Washington run-around at first, but doggedly persisted until assured that the Government would investigate the devastating Mormon raid on Fort Bridger. President Buchanan ordered troops to Utah in the summer of 1857. Jim wangled a job guiding the expedition.

The comic-opera "Mormon War" ended in the spring of 1858 with General Albert Sidney Johnston's troops in possession of the Mormon capital city of Salt Lake—and the Mormon leader, Brigham Young, in possession of a full pardon from President Buchanan! Disgusted by this ironic and ridiculous turn of events, Bridger quit the Army and went home to his Missouri farm. He found that his Indian wife had died in his latest absence, leaving him with a new son, William.



Jim Bridger, greatest of plainsmen, scouts, guides and trappers.

JIM now had four children to support and educate on no income and very little cash. He solved his pressing financial problem by signing for another hitch as scout and guide with the Army.

Bridger presented a thorny problem in turn to spit-and-polish Army disciplinarians. Ignoring military regulations—which he regarded as "mostly damn foofuraw"—the veteran Mountain Man did just about as he pleased. If he became tired late in the afternoon after a hard ride he dismounted, tied his horse, rolled up in a buffalo robe and went to sleep. Since Jim was Chief Guide, everybody else on patrol was forced to dismount and make camp when he did.

Awakening some time after midnight, Bridger would build himself a small fire and roast fresh meat for his "supper." After eating, he'd like as not squat by his fire until dawn "singin' Injun" and beating lustily on a tin pan in lieu of a tom-tom. When disturbed troopers profanely objected, Jim blandly invited them to join the horrendous concert. Boot-throwing was not resorted to by the suffering cavalrymen in the prudent fear of provoking deadly retaliation from the knife-slinging scout.

A bedeviled young captain, in a desperate last-ditch measure, dug a copy of Shakespeare's plays out of his pack and read aloud to the Chief of Scouts. Bridger, sprawled on a buffalo robe by the campfire, smoked his long Indian pipe and listened to Henry V, Macbeth and Hamlet—listened and marveled and finally dozed off to sleep, while the captain crept wearily away to his tent breathing a fervent prayer of thanksgiving to the immortal Bard.

Independent as a Sioux war chief, and every bit as exasperating to the top Army brass, Jim Bridger nevertheless proved invaluable as guide, scout and constant advisor to the military during the savage Indian wars following the Civil War. Nobody understood the Indian's peculiar psychology as well as Jim, when and where he was likely to attack, in what force and by what route. An expert trailer and reader of Indian sign, Bridger seemed to possess an uncanny sixth sense warning him of imminent danger. The cry of a bird, the howl of a wolf, the startled movement of a bighorn sheep grazing on a distant mountain slope—all these told him volumes. Sometimes, paradoxically, the *lack* of these familiar signs and portents indicated more to Jim than their presence. Wise commanders quickly learned to respect the old Mountain Man's judgment: the cocky CO who disregarded his "hunches" was dead sure to run into trouble. General Pat Connor, for example, figured Jim for a fool and paid for the mistake with his command and very nearly with his life.

BRIDGER served as Chief of Scouts with Connor's Powder River Expedition in the summer of 1865. The Sioux, under Red Cloud and Crazy Horse, had been raising hell all summer long, and the Army commanders in the field determined to teach them a lesson even while Washington strove to negotiate a new treaty in the interminable series of pacts and counter-pacts with the arrogant hostiles.

General Connor, a hotheaded Irishman with supreme contempt for the fighting qualities of all Indians, issued the following order to his officers and men on that July morning the troops left Fort Laramie for the Powder: "You will not receive overtures of peace and submission from the Indians, but will attack and kill every male Indian over twelve years of age." In effect—since Indian boys didn't carry birth certificates—Connor had issued a brutal death warrant for every red-skinned lad over the toddling age who might be unlucky enough to be cornered by his troops.

Jim didn't like that order, but was haughtily ignored by Connor when he suggested modifying it. The scout didn't press the matter. He knew where he rated with the fire-breathing General right from the start. This was the orneriest CO he'd ever drawn, and they'd all be damned lucky to get back to Fort Laramie wearin' their *scalps!*

Events proved Bridger an excellent prophet.

Irritation piled upon irritation for Jim in that fantastic Powder River campaign. From the first hour of march nobody paid the slightest attention to the Chief of Scouts; even shavetail lieutenants, new to the Plains, took their cue from the General and regarded the old frontiersman as a quaint buckskin-clad relic of an outmoded past. Within clear sight of the Big Horns—where keen-eyed hos-

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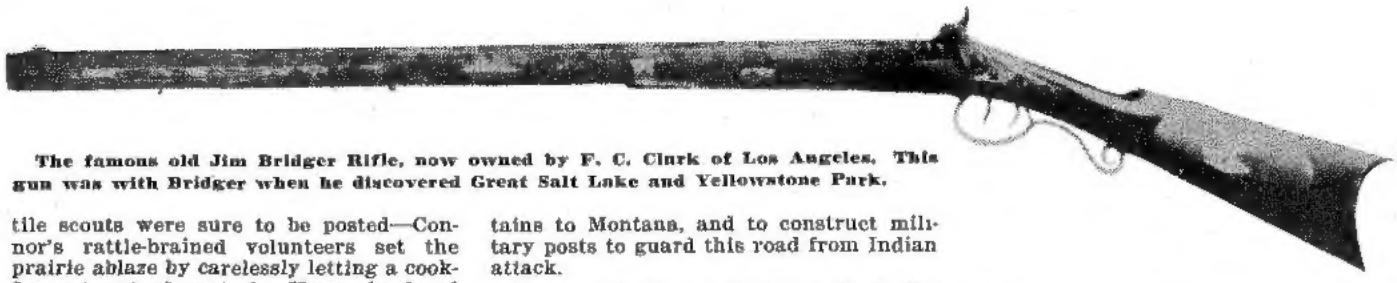

The famous old Jim Bridger Rifle, now owned by F. C. Clark of Los Angeles. This gun was with Bridger when he discovered Great Salt Lake and Yellowstone Park.

tile scouts were sure to be posted—Connor's rattle-brained volunteers set the prairie ablaze by carelessly letting a cook-fire get out of control. Huge clouds of smoke poured up into the crystalline atmosphere, advertising the presence of white men to every Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapahoe warrior for fifty miles around. Bridger protested to the General. Conner replied loftily that the more hostiles were attracted by the billowing smoke, the more there'd be for him to destroy!

Jim gave up then in disgust and kept silent. *Wagh*, he reflected bitterly, watching enemy smoke signals rising ominously from the distant buttes, *thar's no bigger fool in all creation than the fool who thinks he knows everythin'!*

The troops reached Tongue River in the heart of the Indian country late in August. Reconnoitering Pawnee scouts quickly located a big village of hostiles camped one sleep away. Connor decided to leave his ninety wagons in corral on the Tongue, and attack immediately.

FOLLOWING Bridger's advice for once the eager General massed his entire force in the hills above the enemy camp before ordering the charge. The hostiles—a large band of Arapahoes under Chief Black Bear—were surprised and routed almost before they knew what had hit them. Connor's mounted troopers chased the fleeing Indians ten miles with the General roaring along in the lead, blasting away with his fancy ivory-handled Colt and enjoying himself immensely. Outrunning the main body of his command, Connor and a handful of his men found themselves attacked in turn by the quarry they had been chasing. Back they galloped, arrows buzzing like hornets around their ears, to where Bridger was coolly directing his fellow scouts in the methodical destruction of the Arapahoe camp.

Long rifles of the frontiersmen held off the raging Arapahoes until Connor, bellowing like a wounded buffalo bull, reformed his disorganized volunteers.

After destruction of the village was complete, the hard-pressed troops lit out on the double for their wagon corral on Tongue River. Connor's rear guard and flankers fought a vicious running engagement until dark, when the Indians turned back toward their burned camp.

Back at Fort Laramie with "scalps" intact after a hurried and harried retreat from Tongue River, Jim and General Connor drew a discharge and an official reprimand respectively. Connor was relieved of his command, but no hint of censure was directed at the 61-year-old scout.

Jim returned to his Missouri farm for a brief rest, but was back in the service again in May of 1866 with Colonel Henry Carrington's command.

BRIDGER found the Indian situation fouled up worse than ever. Fumbling "peace commissioners" from Washington were trying desperately to pacify the hostiles with gifts and vague promises while the military bulled ahead on its own initiative. Typical of Army operations at this critical period was Colonel Carrington's foolhardy mission to open a wagon road around the Big Horn Mountains to Montana, and to construct military posts to guard this road from Indian attack.

For weird reasons known only to the big brass, the Bozeman Trail was selected for this wagon road in preference to the Bridger Trail laid out by Jim himself in '64. Bozeman's Trail, lying *east* of the Big Horns, ran straight through the Sioux hunting grounds. Any troop movements or post-building along *that* road was bound to stir up real trouble with the Indians. Bridger's road, lying *west* of the guardian mountains, was well outside Sioux territory and shorter to boot. All this being incontestably true, it was of course inevitable that the Army chose the hard way in accordance with its immemorial custom.

There was another disconcerting matter conveniently ignored by the High Command—the embarrassing fact that Carrington's orders were in direct violation of the terms of the Harney-Sanborn Treaty signed by the Sioux leaders only the year before. Bridger gloomily predicted that Red Cloud and Crazy Horse would never stand for such a royal double-crossing without putting up a fight. "Dunno ez I blame 'em much, either!" commented honest old Jim bluntly.

Bridger was stationed with Colonel Carrington's outfit at Fort Phil Kearney on that bleak December 21st, 1866, when Red Cloud and Crazy Horse ringed the new Fort on the Piney with warpainted braves. Jim shook his grizzled head when the rash Captain—breveted Lieutenant-Colonel—William Fetterman led out a detail to bring in the woodchoppers' train from the hills west of the Fort. Eighty-one men, most of them armed with old style muzzle-loading muskets, exposing themselves to 2,000 Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Sioux! Plain murder—and not a durned thing he could do to prevent it. If only these reckless young Civil War officers could be taught how to fight Injuns. . . .

Jim's grim fears were quickly realized. Fetterman—blindly chasing Crazy Horse and a small group of decoys instead of obeying his exact and explicit orders to rescue the wood train and escort it back to the Fort—blundered smack into the ambushing horde of warriors and died valiantly but senselessly, along with every man in his command.

BRIDGER never forgot the horrible sight of the stripped, mutilated bodies of victims being carried into the Fort in relief column wagons after the brief "battle." What hit the tough old Mountain Man hardest was the pitiful spectacle of Lieutenant Grummond's young wife moving dazedly forward on the Colonel's supporting arm to pick out the body of her husband from among the scores of staring, frozen corpses.

Bad medicine this— and the awful responsibility rested squarely on the heedless shoulders of the treaty-breaking white man, not upon the outraged tribesmen. Jim was saddened by it all. For the first time in his life he felt old and out of place.

"Red Cloud's War" ended in August, 1868, in complete if temporary victory for the Sioux. Jim Bridger marched with the soldiers out of Fort Phil Kearney—and Red Cloud's warriors came whooping down from the mountains to fire the newly constructed post. Everything inflammable was burned to the ground—Fort, stockade, cabins and corrals. Not a vestige of a *Wasichu* habitation was left standing when the triumphant braves completed their vengeful work of destruction.

Abandonment of Fort Smith on the Big Horn River and Fort Reno at the head of the Powder followed in early autumn. Again Red Cloud's exulting warriors put the torch to the hated white man's forts and danced the Victory Dance around the leaping flames. Even the stern, silent Crazy Horse joined in the wild festivities celebrating the end of Army occupation of the Sioux hunting grounds.

On November 6, 1868, Red Cloud himself rode grandly into Fort Laramie to sign a brand-new treaty with the jittery representatives of the Great White Father in Washington. By touching the pen used at the council, the Chief officially ended the only war ever lost by the U. S. Army.

IN 1870, Jim Bridger's health began to fail and he was discharged from the Army for the last time. For some months after his discharge the old scout clung to his beloved mountains, but early in 1871 Jim's illness became so pronounced he was forced to leave the West and go home to Missouri—to "git ready for that last long trip to the Spirit Land," as he dourly expressed it.

The "last long trip" was painfully slow in coming for Jim. The goiter he had contracted years before from drinking iodine-deficient mountain water troubled him greatly; his "rheumatiz" and an old neglected hernia combined to virtually cripple him. Worst of all, Jim's once phenomenally keen eyesight gradually dimmed until by 1875 he was totally blind.

Losing his eyesight was a crushing blow to the aged Mountain Man. Always restless, he was now doubly so. Accustomed as he was to high, wide skies and far-flung horizons, Jim found blindness almost unendurable. Most of all, he missed watching the sun rise and set each day. Storms depressed him because he couldn't "git to see 'em rollin' up across the sky." His hearing seemed to sharpen, as if in compensation for his blindness. He loved to listen to the wind rustling the ripened wheat, and the dissonant wild clangor of gray geese flying overhead in the night set the caged hunter trembling like a leashed hound.

On days when the weather was pleasant, Jim's faithful daughter, Virginia, would saddle his placid old horse for him and start the pair off on a meandering tour of the fields, escorted by the farm dog, Sultan. Sometimes the horse would wander off into the woods and get lost. Then Sultan would trot home alone, and Virginia would leave her housework to rescue her father.

(Continued on page 41)

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Illustrations by Herndon Davis

Then began a struggle as Moore fought desperately for his life.

"Half Bear—Half Man!"

By ELEANOR KAY

That's what they called him—this pitiful recluse whose life was ruined by the ripping claws of a maddened bear.

THE MAN must have had a Christian name. He must have had a family, too, somewhere. But the bear's claws ripped him away from these, from everything a man holds dear. This is the true story of a tragic life.

Three stalwart young men, only a few years out of their 'teens, rode around a bend just as the sun was going down. They were in high spirits; they had left Magdalena, New Mexico, to the northeast, several days before, and now they were in the heart of a wild country where almost anything exciting might happen. Bring on your adventures—here were three men who were looking for them!

The time was the early '80s, when the West was really wild. Game of all sorts abounded throughout the mountains, and there was a possibility of Indians, also, but the three youths were hunting bear, and gave little thought to anything else.

As they came around the bend, all three saw the cow's carcass at once. With whoops of joy, they rode forward, and without alighting from their saddles they carefully studied the ground about the dead animal. The late sunlight shone on the tracks of a large bear, which had killed the cow and eaten as much as he wanted for that occasion before ambling away.

"We'll come back tonight", one of the young men said, with the air of an expert on such things. "Then we'll get him."

"Where can we go to watch?" queried the second. "We won't dare stay too near—I mean", he added, as his companions looked quizzically at him, "we'd frighten the bear away if he knew we were around"

"How about that thicket yonder?" asked the third youth. "We can camp 'way back beyond it, and then come up that far to watch. How does that strike you?"

THE TREES were so thickly hung with low-trailing wild grape vines a man must crawl on hands and knees to get through. It appeared an ideal place for watching, especially since there was a good camp site farther on. Here was the perfect setting for a drama of high adventure, in which they planned to play heroes and the bear the villain. They did not realize at the time that the casting was a little faulty.

Darkness fell. They drew lots to see who should take the various watches through the night, and agreed that whoever saw the bear should come back and awaken the two staying in camp. These two could scarcely get to sleep for thinking about that bear. How big was he? What color would he be? It was possible that the first shot would only wound him—would he charge them? Shivering with eager apprehension, they finally dropped into a sound slumber.

The night was almost over, and several two-hour watches had been passed, when the bear came. He approached the cow cautiously; he moved clumsily yet quietly. At one moment the sleepy watcher in the thicket saw only moonlight—the next, there was a new shadow added to the more familiar ones, a shadow that moved. Somehow, this was different from the gay anticipations of broad daylight. The smooth quiet, the quality of weirdness which moonlight gives even the best-known objects, and the presence of the bear, were more than the youth could endure. He backed cautiously out of the thicket and hastened to camp, where he crawled into the bedding without saying a word.

The movement awakened the man beside him, a young fellow named Moore. "Is it my turn?" he whispered. "It's getting cold; must be nearly day."

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There was no answer, but he decided that his friend was too chilly and sleepy to talk. Only half awake himself, he made his way to the thicket, where he dropped to his knees and began to crawl under the drooping grapevines.

IT MUST have seemed to him like a horrible dream when his hands suddenly encountered rough, warm fur, and he was seized by powerful forelegs armed with terrible, ripping claws. How could anyone have imagined that the bear, after eating his fill, would retire to the thicket to sleep? Moore had crawled right upon him!

Then began a struggle between man and bear, a writhing, heaving shadow in the darkness under the trees, as Moore fought desperately for his life. In the end the bear shambled away, leaving behind what looked like a mangled carcass.

It lay there, motionless, until almost daybreak, when at last consciousness came. Moore realized he was sorely wounded; his body was raked and ripped again and again by those lacerating claws. Every least movement was torture.

The southwestern Indians regard the bear as a creature of great supernatural power, and a man surviving an encounter with one is surely endowed with something of the great brute's attributes. Perhaps they are right: something within that poor torn, quivering body would not let him rest, would not allow him to sink again into oblivion. It urged him to move, to do what could be done to preserve his life. If he lay there he would die. Gathering what energy he could, he managed to crawl out of the thicket and gain his feet. Then he set out, weaving, staggering, and blundering along, to get back to camp.

The two peaceful sleepers awakened in the faint light of dawn to see a hideous apparition standing before them. Moore's back had been clawed into a raw mass of torn flesh, and his arms hung useless at his sides. But what was most frightful, his lower jaw had been torn loose and lay on his chest. He made horrible gurgling noises in his throat, but words were impossible. He swayed as he stood before them, and the blood dripped down his helpless arms.

The youth who had unwittingly sent Moore to this frightful fate gave one glaring look at him, screamed and fled. His companion, braver and with a clearer conscience, stayed his ground and tried to find out what had happened. Moore could neither speak nor write, but he motioned with his foot until his friend understood and took off the shoe; then he painfully drew on the ground with his toe the letters M-A-G-D-A.

"Magdalena?" the friend asked, and the bloody vision managed to indicate assent. "Take me to Magdalena!" his eyes implored. "Help me to leave this place before I die!"

THAT IS how "Bear" Moore got his name and his pathetically disfigured face, covered with awful scars that no beard could quite conceal. And that is why, shunning curious, laughing, questioning mankind, he chose to spend the rest of his life in the wilderness. He did not stay long in one place; a lonely cabin on a bench in the west fork of the Gila river was perhaps his least transient habitation. He was never at peace since that night of horror, always restless, always suspicious, like a bear which has once been wounded.

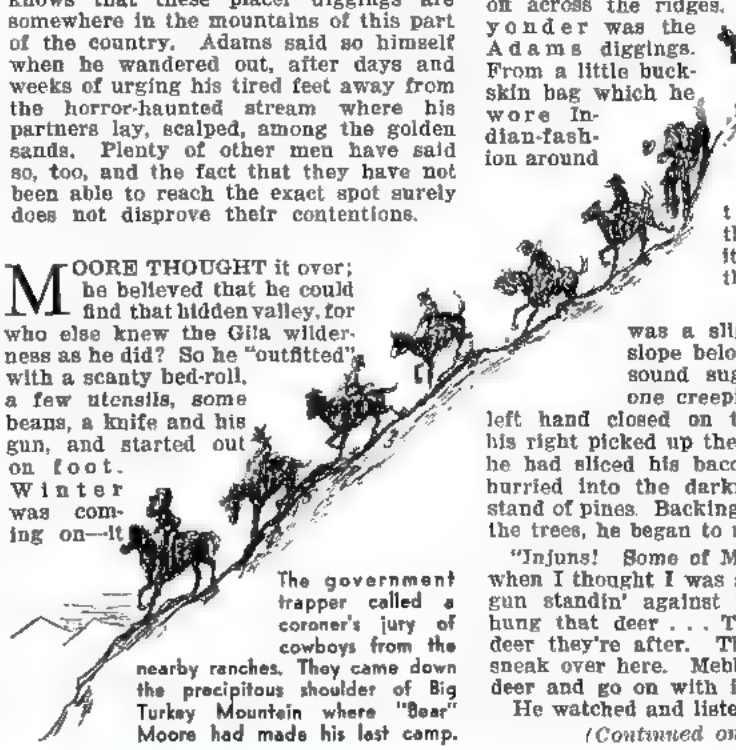
Apaches occasionally roamed along the river, but Moore was a match for any Indian. On at least one occasion he frightened them away by making use of an echo from rocks on the hillside across the river. They never managed to get the best of him; it was as if he had inherited something of the bear's cunning. But later on, when the last Indians had left the Gila wilderness, he still believed that they were prowling about, and still prepared against them. What caused the man to imagine hostile redskins in a part of the country where no Indians now lived? Certainly a terrific shock might unbalance any mind, and "Bear" Moore had endured such a shock. Sometimes he moved into various caves and abandoned cabins, or even took to the tree-grown hillside, hiding out from his intangible foes.

"Bear" Moore. Away from everyone and everything.

However, he was not afaird of the white men whom he occasionally met in the wilderness. Sometimes a cowboy, riding across country, would find the recluse by his lonely fireside, and stop for a cup of coffee and a little talk. Cowboys are kindly folk to those in trouble, and it was only to such as these that Moore showed friendliness. They were his contact with the world; they did his little shopping, and brought back the gossip of the region with the tiny parcels. Once in a while, lonely for more than this casual company, he would move into a shack a mile or so from a town, but he would not stay long. Bear-like, he would wander into the depths of the forest again, away from everything and everyone. This was his life for forty long, lonely years.

Then, in the fall of 1922, someone gave him a nugget, a rather large one, with the story that it had come from the lost Adams diggings. Everyone knows that these placer diggings are somewhere in the mountains of this part of the country. Adams said so himself when he wandered out, after days and weeks of urging his tired feet away from the horror-haunted stream where his partners lay, scalped, among the golden sands. Plenty of other men have said so, too, and the fact that they have not been able to reach the exact spot surely does not disprove their contentions.

MOORE THOUGHT it over; he believed that he could find that hidden valley, for who else knew the Gila wilderness as he did? So he "outfitted" with a scanty bed-roll, a few utensils, some beans, a knife and his gun, and started out on foot. Winter was coming on—it comes early in those high mountains—but he did not consider that for a moment. He was going to find the Adams diggings, and weather should not stay him.



The government trapper called a coroner's jury of cowboys from the nearby ranches. They came down the precipitous shoulder of Big Turkey Mountain where "Bear" Moore had made his last camp.

He stopped to camp one evening on a shoulder of Big Turkey mountain. Stiff fingers spread the scanty bedding under a rock ledge, while the campfire crackled cheerily and the battered black pail of coffee began to steam. It would take only a few minutes to get supper; bacon was sliced and ready in the pan, and there was a half-empty pail of beans to be reheated. He went back some distance along the ridge and dragged in the carcass of a small doe, which he had shot on the way. A slice of venison fried in the bacon grease would make a feast.

There was no hurry. Moore was tired and cold—for he wore no underwear, not even socks. He decided to rest for a few moments.

It was not quite dark. A person could see some distance through the trees and off across the ridges. Somewhere over yonder was the Adams diggings. From a little buckskin bag which he wore Indian-fashion around his neck the old man took the heavy, rough nugget, as large as the end of his thumb, and turned it over and over in the firelight.

Suddenly there was a slight sound on the slope below him, a stealthy sound suggestive of someone creeping near. Moore's left hand closed on the nugget, while his right picked up the knife with which he had sliced his bacon. He arose and hurried into the darkness of a nearby stand of pines. Backing cautiously among the trees, he began to mutter to himself:

"Injuns! Some of Mangas' band. Just when I thought I was all alone. An' my gun standin' against the tree where I hung that deer . . . That's it. It's the deer they're after. They ain't seen me sneak over here. Mebbe they'll take the deer and go on with it."

He watched and listened for a moment.

(Continued on page 45)

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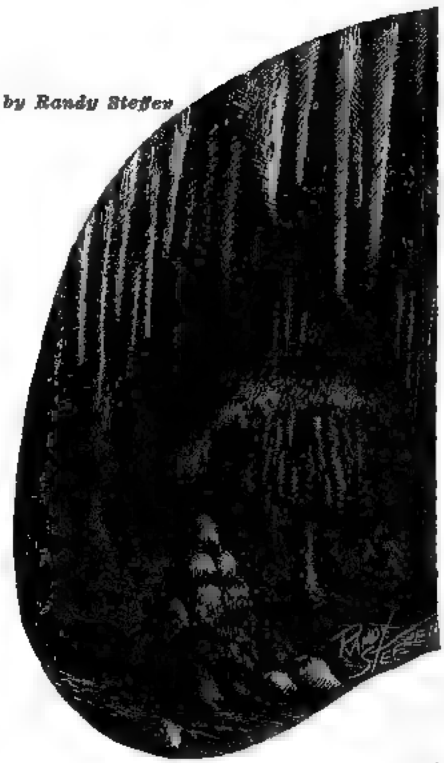
A True West Classic

...NOT THE WILL OF GOD

Illustrated by Randy Steffen



by J. FRANK DOBIE

Editor's Note:

Here is a classic little story taken from APACHE GOLD AND YAQUI SILVER, by J. Frank Dobie (Little, Brown and Company) which we think you'll enjoy thoroughly.

THERE were three of us—a border ranchman, his *pastor*, and myself. We had stopped at the goat camp after a long day's ride on horses. The goat-herder's fire was very cheerful as it blazed against a natural windbreak of black chaparral brush, and the odor of kid ribs roasting over it made us forget the norther.

A man is like a dog. After he has eaten he is loath to stir from warmth.

"Tomás," said the border ranchman, "I want you to tell my friend why you left Mexico for this country."

Tomás was pinching the end off a shuck cigarette filled with black-leaf "Lobo Negro" tobacco. He took a coal of fire in his fingers to light it. He adjusted the frazzled serape about his neck and shifted his squatting position so as to be a little more out of the cold wind.

"Patrón," he said, "I see you are taking a cough. I gathered today some of the roots of the *anacahuita*. It will be well to make you a little tea."

I had not noticed the cough. The old Mexican got a tomato can from which the top had been melted, unwrapped a flour sack that swathed the roots, broke them into the can, filled it with water, and spent fully two minutes adjusting a heap of coals to set it on.

A coyote began howling not far away.

"The coyotes," remarked the *pastor*, "have for three mornings now sung on top of the hills after sun-up instead of in the valleys before the sun came out. It will rain."

Soon the tea had boiled.

"It would be better," remarked the border ranchman, "if it had some lemon in it."

"Tomás," he said again, after expressing his thanks, "I want you to tell us why you left Mexico to come to Texas."

"A coyote," the goat-herder dallied, "has killed a black kid. It has always been known that coyotes will not molest a goat that is black. Something strange is waiting to happen. Perhaps it will snow this winter."

But at last Tomas got his tale going. This is what he told.

DEEP within the Sierra Madre, in the state of Chihuahua, on what is known as the Arroyo Colorado, Tomás as a young man lived and worked for a merchant named Joaquin Villareal. The store was the only store of the village—a mere groupment of huts. Around it were great forests running down into the canyons and crawling up to the mountain crests. Scattered back in the mountains lived a few timber cutters, and they all depended upon Don Joaquin Villareal. He furnished them what scanty supplies they had and periodically went out to check the ties they had cut.

Then, maybe once a year, they came into the village and settled their accounts.

Once when the time came to make a checking of the ties, Don Joaquin took sick. He decided to send Tomás in his place. Tomás knew all the men and he knew the country in a general way, though he had never made one of these trips of inspection.

He must, he knew, go prepared with bed and provisions. So with a canteen of water on one side of his flathorned saddle, a morral (a fiber bag) of frijoles and tortillas on the other, and a blanket tied on behind he set forth.

"My mule," admonished Don Joaquin, "will show you the way."

She was a good little mule, but Tomás' trouble was that he did not take enough provisions. He had forgotten how large and sparsely settled the country

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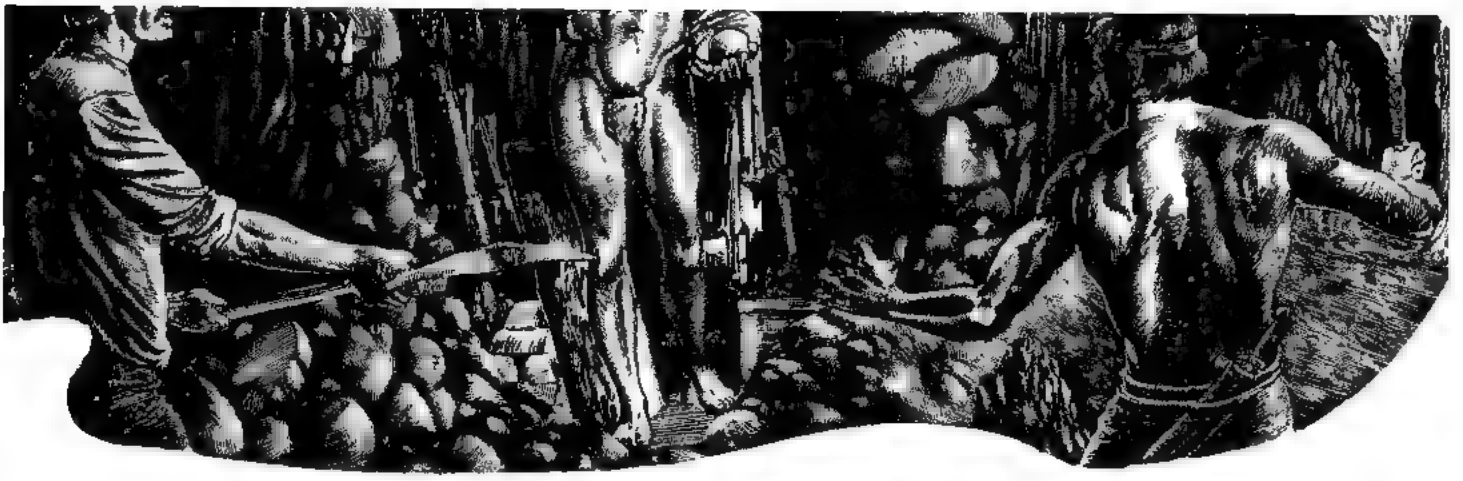

"In the dim light made by the torch of sotol stalk, Tomás and Don Joaquín saw a figure of bronze larger than a real man. In its right hand was a dagger, securely bound there by rawhide thongs."

was. At the end of four days he had checked two tie-cutters and had consumed all his food but a half-dozen buttons of garlic and that many tortillas. That evening he came to a poor, lonely *jacal*, or cabin. He recognized the inhabitant who came out to meet him as one of his employer's men named Ignacio. He was hospitably invited in to eat, and to spend the night.

"Though we have very little," said Ignacio, "it is yours."

LITTLE enough it proved. For supper there was nothing but parched corn and tea from mulato bark, without sugar. Tomás went out to his saddle, took from the morral the garlic and six tortillas he had left, and added them to the table. It was a feast for the tie-cutter and his wife. They appeared to have no children.

After they were through eating Tomás said, "Tell me why you live so hard, this way."

Ignacio replied: "We have always lived hard this way. It is the will of God that we should always live this way."

There was silence for a long time. Then the woman said: "No, it is not the will of God. We could have had plenty, but my husband has not willed it."

"How is that?" asked Tomás.

"I will tell you. It is nearly ten years ago now—ten years next Christmas. It was cold. In the late evening an old, old Indian came to our *jacal*. His blanket was but shreds. The sandals on his feet were worn through. We gave him such food as we had. We had some wild artichokes as well as parched corn. The Indian was grateful. He told us a strange, strange story.

"He said that he was the very last of his tribe. I do not remember their name, but when I was a child I heard my grandmother's mother tell of their fierceness. From the earliest times this tribe had warred against the Government. The Government had forced them back into the wildest parts of the mountains. Here for years they existed but to get revenge. They got revenge by raiding every pack train that passed. In those days, you know, the Spaniards had wonderful mines at Tayopa, Gloria Pan, and other places in the Sierra Madre and brought gold and silver out on pack mules.

"The Indians killed the guards. They captured bullion of silver and bars of gold. They captured jewels meant for cathedrals and for daughters of the rich. They captured guns and ammunition and saddles plated with silver. They captured also a great bronze image of a man. All this stuff they put in a cave.

"This cave, so the old Indian said, was a room twenty feet wide and thirty feet long. First, one entered a cavern without limits. Then one went through a narrow passage. Then one was in the treasure chamber. The Indians had no desire for wealth. All they desired was their old freedom. They did not want the Spaniards ever to recover the riches. In time the pack trains ceased to pass. The rich mines were closed.

THEN the Indians sealed up the passage between the big cavern and the room full of riches. At one place, though, they left the wall very thin. In front of this false wall they set a kind of trap. Behind it they placed the image of the bronze man, and in

(Continued on page 36)

"You do not have to live so hard," the old Indian said. "I know where there is a room in a cavern. It is filled with bullion of silver, bars of gold, jewels and saddles plated with silver . . ."

Hot-Iron Killer

By HAMILTON CRAIGIE

When they got through making Hamilcar Poole, they threw away the die.

Illus. by James T. Jones

STRANGE were many men who roamed the Old West, but you could search for months through thousands of dusty files and never uncover a character as fantastic as Hamilcar Poole—the mighty, roving giant of a man who earned the name of Sin-Killer because he made it his mission in life to carry the message of God.

But in carrying out that mission...

Take, as a starter, what happened in that bar in a little Arizona town way back in the Eighties when three cowhands were taking on a load, getting ready to go on the prod.

Gil Perkins, as tough as they came, was the leader of the trio. It was Gil who decided they ought to have a little fun with the sky pilot who'd just blown into town.

"If there's anything I don't cotton to it's a Gospel sharp," Gil said. He said it to a bar almost empty, for the people lined up there had drawn back when they saw the mood of the three cowhands—that is, all the people except one man.

That one man, a giant of a fellow, raised a whiskey glass that looked like a thimble in his huge paw, tossed off the drink, and ordered another. He didn't bother to look at the three cowhands on the prod. He seemed to be drinking his whiskey and meditating.

The cowhands tossed off a couple more drinks. Then Gil Perkins noticed a little man, a drummer, standing near the swinging doors.

"Say, pardner," Gil said to the cringing man, "you look like a preacher to me."

"I ain't no preacher, honest," the little man said.

"All right, then, where is this psalm-singer I've been hearing about?"

The little man pointed—along the bar, to the giant with the whiskey glass in his hand.

GIL looked and saw. His companions looked and saw. What they saw slowed them down. But it didn't stop them. They moved forward.

"You sure enough a preacher?" Gil asked.

"I'm a sinful man," the giant said, "but at the same time I am a man of God. What can I do for you, gentlemen?"

"You can dance," Gil said. The roar of his forty-five followed as a bullet ripped into the floor near the giant's feet. The preacher stood like a rock.

"One minute, gentlemen," he said. "If I can persuade you to give up drinking and profanity, would you go back on your word?"

The way he said "persuade" sounded strange—like he meant it.

"Sounds reasonable," Gil said, winking, "IF you can persuade us, parson. Start persuading."

"Better start dancing," another of the cowhands said.

Then Sin-Killer, moving with the speed and power that spread his fame ahead of him wherever he went, swept into action. He gathered the three cowboys into a close embrace. The banging of head against head could be heard above the howls of pain as the preacher mercilessly punished the three men.

When he had knocked the three heads together enough to suit him, Sin-Killer lifted the three men from the floor and flung them almost the length of the bar. They fell in a heap on the floor. Sin-Killer followed them

"I am a man of peace," he said "But there are times when it is necessary to smite the Amalekite, even as Samson slew 1,000 warriors with the jawbone of an ass. I regret this, but, gentlemen, are you persuaded?"

"I don't go back on no promise, preacher," Perkins said. "If that's gettin' religion, I got it. But, Reverend, I'd shore like a drink..."

Sin-Killer then revealed still another interesting side of his strange character. He called for drinks for the three cowhands. "Fighting is thirsty work," he said.

Then he left, smiling peacefully.

THE fight that carried the name of Sin-Killer throughout much of the Old West was known locally as the branding-iron battle. Many people called

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Sin-Killer Poole delivered God's word with Bible and six-gun.

They killed my best friend . . . those

GAUNTLET GLOVES

"It did look inviting, up on that rickety scaffold—just waiting for some cowpoke to pop a loop over it and pull'er to the ground . . ." Drawing by Wnuneta Wyoming Robb.

. . . the ones I stole from an Indian's grave!

by HARRY ROBB

IT sounds bad, I know. Maybe it *is* bad. But I can't help it. I'm a grave robber—an Indian grave robber. Or, maybe I should say, I used to be. I haven't robbed one in a long time now.

Nobody in his right mind will plunder Indian graves, but it *is* fascinating. It's dangerous, and it's undignified — but there's a lure to it that won't turn you loose. It's intriguing, that guess at what has been carefully laid away with an Indian, high up under a cliff, by mourning tribesmen. Perhaps the grave is underneath a pile of stones, high on a windswept hill, bound to poles up in a tree, or perched high in the air on a scaffold The only sure "guess" is to dig in and see what the Indian may have called his treasured possessions.

I should have left that last grave alone. It did look inviting, though—perched up on the rickety scaffold. It appeared to be just waiting for some cowpuncher to pop his loop over an out-jutting corner pole. If he were reckless enough, perhaps crazy enough, he'd go to the end of a forty-foot rope with all the speed his horse could get up in that distance. In most cases, that's plenty of speed, for horses are plenty spooky of Indian smell —especially dead Indian smell!

I thought there might be some elk teeth in this one. Instead, among trinkets that no cowpuncher would care for, there was a pair of gauntlet gloves. They were tucked in, evidently as an afterthought—under the top blanket where they stayed in good condition while the Indian dried up. They were nice gloves, apparently never worn. They are still in perfect condition to this day. But I look at the bloodstains on them and they give me the creeps. They killed my best friend . . .

THE gloves smelled so strong that I tied some of the buckskin fringe strings into my horse's tail about half way down. Still, I had plenty of smell all the way in to camp.

When I rode in with the bead-decorated gloves, Roy Robbins was ready to trade the shirt off his back for them. When he found out where I'd gotten them, he talked a heap about working graves himself if they contained such treasures as that. I told him it was a stinking job at best. A dead Indian turns loose more smell than a skunk when he gets stirred up.

On top of that, I told Roy how dangerous it was. If a fellow gets caught at it, he stops robbing graves right then and there. You couldn't blame an Indian for parting your hair with a tomahawk if he found you robbing his dead.

"So, you just better not try it, Roy," I advised. But I knew that some day he would. Graves were numerous all over the Montana reservation. Too, Roy was a youngster. He wouldn't listen long to an older head.

I became so concerned that I offered to give him the gloves if he would promise me to leave the graves alone. "Don't wear the gloves either," I added. "They're dangerous while working cattle. Just hang on to them for a keepsake."

"Don't guess I'd want to wear them at that," Roy said. "They still smell like a dead Indian."

So Roy promised to give up all plans for grave robbing. He gave the gloves a good soapsudsing. It washed out a good bit of the smell. Long hours under a hot sun did the rest. That's when Roy went back on one part of his promise—he began wearing the gloves. I reminded him of the promise, and asked him if he didn't know that gauntlet gloves were no good for a cowpuncher.

"Hell!" he said simply. "They look as good on me as on an Indian!"

I didn't say more. I supposed he knew they were dangerous. Maybe he thought I was mothering him too much. Then again, maybe he didn't know, and before he found out it was too late.

One day, after he'd been wearing the gloves for about ten days, Roy came out of the corral leading a not-too-gentle broomtail. The horse had a mean look in his eyes. Roy put a hackamore on the nag and stuck his arm through three coils of the rope. When he threw the saddle blanket on the shifty-eyed cayuse, the horse boogered and started to run.

Those gauntlet gloves did the rest. The hair rope cinched up around the gauntlet. Roy didn't have a chance.

THE horse couldn't drag him far after they hit a stretch of sagebrush. Roy's

(Continued on page 34)

"It's a terrifying experience for a horse. The hide sailed high, popped together, caught on the sagebrush, snapped loose, went up over the killer's back—and banged the ground behind him." Drawing by Geo. Phippen.

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Editor's Note:

Don't miss this classic of trail drive danger because it gets off to a "slow" start. How many of you will ever have a chance to learn the inside workings of an old trail drive crew? You'll get a pretty good picture of it in the first two thousand words of this story.

Deathly quiet hung over the great herd. Utter blackness pressed in. Suddenly, the storm broke — and seventeen hundred longhorns were running madly. Still, I had no way of knowing that this was to be . . .

LONGROPE'S LAST GUARD

by CHARLES M. RUSSELL

WHOEVER told you that cattle stampede without cause was talkin' like a shorthorn," says Rawhide Rawlins. "You can bet all you got that whenever cattle run, there's a reason for it. A whole lot of times cattle run, an' nobody knows why but the cows an' they won't tell.

"There's plenty of humans call it instinct when an animal does something they don't savvy. I don't know what it is myself, but I've seen the time when I'd like to a-had some. I've knowed of hosses bein' trailed a thousand miles an' turned loose, that pulled back for their home range, not goin' the trail they come, but takin' cut-offs across mountain ranges that would puzzle a bighorn. An' if you'd ask one of these wise boys how they done it, he'd back out of it easy by sayin' it's instinct. You'll find cow ponies that knows more about the business than the men that rides 'em.

"There's plenty of causes for a stampede; sometimes it's a green hand or a careless cowpuncher scratchin' a match to light a cigarette. Maybe it's something on the wind, or a tired nighthoss spraddles and shakes himself, an' the poppin' of the saddle leather causes them to jump the bed-ground. Scare a herd on the start, and you're liable to have hell with them all the way. I've seen bunches well trail-broke that you couldn't fog off the bed-ground with a slicker an' six-shooter; others, again, that had had a scare, you'd have to ride a hundred yards away from to spit.

Some men's too careful with their herd an' go tiptoein' around like a mother with a sick kid. I've had some experience, an' claim this won't do. Break 'em so they'll stand noise; get 'em used to seein' a man afoot, an' you'll have less trouble.

"There's some herds that you dassen't quit your hoss short of five hundred yards of. Of course it's natural enough for cow-brutes that never see hoss an' man apart to scare some when they see 'em separate. They think the top of this animal's busted off, an' when they see the piece go movin' around they're plenty surprised; but as I said before, there's many reasons for stampedes unknown to man. I've seen herds start in broad daylight with no cause that anybody knows of. The smell of blood will start 'em goin'; this generally comes off in the mornin' when they're quittin' the bed-ground. Now, in every herd you'll find steers that's regular old rounders. They won't go to bed like decent folks, but put in the night pursuin' around, disturbin' the peace. If there's any bulls in the bunch, there's liable to be fightin'. I've often watched an old bull walkin' around through the herd an' talkin' fight, hangin' up his bluff, with a bunch of these rounders at his heels. They're sure backin' him up—boostin' an' ribbin' up trouble, an' if there's a fight pulled off you should hear these trouble-builders takin' sides; every one of 'em with his tongue out an' his tail kinked, buckin' an' bellerin', like his money's all up. These night ramblers that won't go to bed at decent hours, after raisin' hell all night, are ready to bed down an' are sleepin' like drunks when decent cattle are walkin' off the bed-ground.

Now, you know, when a cow-brute quits his bed he bows his neck, gapes an' stretches all the same as a human after a night's rest. Maybe he accidentally tromps on one of these rounders' tails that's layin' along the ground. This hurts plenty, and Mr. Night Rambler ain't slow about wakin' up; he raises like he's overslept an's afeared he'll miss the coach, leavin' the tossel of his tail under the other fellow's hoof. He goes off wringin' his stub an' scatterin' blood on his rump an' quarters. Now the minute them other cattle winds the blood, the ball opens. Every hoof's at his heels barkin' and bellerin'. Them that's close enough are hornin' him in the flank like they'd stuck to finish him off. They're all plumb hog-wild, an' if you want any beef left in your herd you'd better cut out the one that's causin' the excitement, 'cause an hour of this will take off more taller than they'll put on in a month.

"Cattle like open country to sleep in. I sure hate to hold a herd near any brakes or deep 'royos, 'cause no matter how gentle a herd is, let a coyote or any other animal loom up of a sudden close to 'em an' they don't stop to take a second look, but are gone like a flash in the pan. Old bulls comin' up without talkin' sometimes jump a herd this way, an' it pays a cowpuncher to sing when he's comin' up out of a 'royo close to the bed-ground.

"Some folks'll tell you that cowboys sing their cows to sleep, but that's a mistake, judgin' from my experience, an' I've had some. The songs an' voices I've heard around cattle ain't soothin'. A cowpuncher sings to keep himself company; it ain't that he's got any motherly love for these longhorns he's put to bed an' 's ridin' herd on; he's amusin' himself an' nobody else. These ditties are generally shy on melody an' strong on noise. Put a man alone in the dark, an' if his conscience is clear an' he ain't hidin' he'll sing an' don't need to be a born vocalist. Of course singin's a good thing around a herd, an' all punchers know it. In the darkness it lets the cows know where you're at. If you ever woke up in the darkness an' found somebody —you didn't know who or what—loomin' up over you, it would startle you, but if this somebody is singin' or whistlin', it wouldn't scare you none. It's the same with Mr. Steer; that snaky, noiseless glidin' up on him's what scares the animal.

"All herds has some of these lonesomes that won't lie down with

(Continued on following page)

"It's a kind of hummin' noise like a buzz-saw, only a thousand times louder. There's no use tryin' to turn 'em in this darkness . . ."

Drawing by Geo. Phippen

KANSAS

"PULLIN' MY GUN, I EMPTY HER IN THE AIR."

the other cattle, but beds down alone maybe twenty-five to thirty yards from the edge of the herd. He's got his own reason for this; might be he's short an eye. This bein' the case you can lay all you got he's layin' with the good blinker next to the herd. He don't figure on lettin' none of his playful brothers beef his ribs from a sneak. One-eyed hoss is the same. Day or night you'll find him on the outside with his good eye watchin' the bunch. Like Mister Steer, the confidence he's got in his brother's mighty frail.

"But these lonesome cattle I started to tell you about, is the ones that a puncher's most liable to run onto in the dark, layin' out that way from the herd. If you ride onto him singin', it don't startle Mr. Steer; he raises easy, holdin' his ground till you pass; then he lays down in the same place. He's got the ground warm an' hates to quit her. Cows, the same as humans, like warm beds. Many's the time in cool weather I've seen some evil-minded, low-down steer stand around like he ain't goin' to bed, but all the time he's got his eye on some poor, undersized brother layin' near by, all innocent. As soon as he thinks the ground's warm, he walks over, horns him out an' jumps his claim. This low-down trick is sometimes practiced by punchers when they got a gentle herd. It don't hurt a cowpuncher's conscience none to sleep in a bed he stole from a steer.

"If you ride sneakin' an' noiseless onto one of these lonesome fellers, he gets right to his feet with dew-claws an' hoofs ratilin', an' 's runnin' before he's half up, hittin' the herd like a canned dog, an' quicker than you can bat an eye the whole herd's gone. Cows are slow animals, but scare 'em an' they're fast enough; a thousand will get to their feet as quick as one. It's sure a puzzler to cowmen to know how a herd will all scare at once, an' every animal will get on his feet at the same time. I've seen herds do what a cowpuncher would call 'jump' — that is, to raise an' not run. I've been lookin' across a herd in bright moonlight — a thousand head or more, all down; with no known cause there's a short, quick rumble, an' every hoof's standin'.

"I've read of stampedes that were sure dangerous an' scary, where a herd would run through a camp, upsettin' wagons an' trompin' sleepin' cowpunchers to death. When day broke they'd be fifty or a hundred miles from where they started, leavin' a trail strewn with blood, dead cowpunchers, an' hosses, that looked like the work of a Kansas cyclone. This is all right in books, but the feller that writes 'em is romancin' an' don't savvy the cow. Most stampedes is noisy, but harmless to anybody but the cattle. A herd in a bad storm might drift thirty miles in a night, but the worst run I ever see, we ain't four miles from the bed-ground when the day broke.

THIS was down in Kansas; we're trailin' beef an' have got about seventeen hundred head. Barrin' a few dry ones the herd's straight steers, mostly Spanish longhorns from down on the Cimarron. We're about fifty miles south of Dodge. Our herd's well broke an' lookin' fine, an' the cowpunchers all good-natured, thinkin' of the good time comin' in Dodge.

"That evenin' when we're ropin' our hosses for night guard, the trail boss, 'Old Spanish' we call him he ain't no real Spaniard, but he's rode some in Old Mexico an' can talk some Spanish — says to me: 'Them cattle ought to hold well, they ain't been off water four hours, an' we grazed 'em plumb onto the bed-ground. Every hoof of 'em's got a paunch full of grass an' water, an' that's what makes cattle lay good.'

"Me an' a feller called Longrope's on first guard. He's a centerfire or single-cinch man from California; packs a sixty-foot rawhide riata, an' when he takes her down an' runs about half of her into a loop she looks big, but when it reaches the animal, comes pretty near fittin' hoof or horn. I never went much on these longrope boys, but this man comes as near puttin' his loop where he wants as any I ever see. You know Texas men ain't got much love for a single rig, an' many's the argument me an' Longrope has on this subject. He claims a center-fire is the only saddle, but I 'low that they'll do all right on a shad-bellied western hoss, but for Spanish pot-gutted ponies they're no good. You're ridin' up on his withers all the time.

"When we reach the bed-ground, most of the cattle's already down, lookin' comfortable. They're bedded in open country, an' things look good for an easy night. It's been mighty hot all day, but there's a little breeze now makin' it right pleasant; but down the west I notice some nasty-lookin' clouds hangin' 'round the new moon that's got one horn hooked over the skyline. The storm's so far off that you can just hear her rumble, but she's walkin' up on us slow, an' I'm hopin' she'll go 'round. The cattle's all layin' quiet an' nice, so me an' Longrope stop to talk awhile.

"'They're layin' quiet,' says I.

"'Too damn quiet,' says he. 'I like cows to lay still all right, but I want some of the natural noises that goes with a herd this size. I want to hear 'em blowin' off, an' the creakin' of their joints, showin' they're easin' themselves in their beds. Listen, an' if you hear anything I'll eat that rimfire saddle of yours — grass rope an' all.'

"I didn't notice till then, but when I straighten my ears it's quiet as a grave. An' if it ain't for the lightnin' showin' the herd once in a while, I couldn't a-believed that seventeen hundred head of longhorns lay within forty feet of where I'm sittin' on my hoss. It's gettin' darker every minute, an' if it wasn't for Longrope's slicker I couldn't a-made him out, though he's so close I could have touched him with my hand. Finally it darkens up so I can't see him at all. It's black as a nigger's pocket; you couldn't find your nose with both hands.

"I remember askin' Longrope the time.

"'I guess I'll have to get help to find the timepiece,' says he, but gets her after feelin' over himself, an' holdin' her under his cigarette takes a long draw, lightin' up her face.

"'Half-past nine,' says he.

"'Half an hour more,' I says. 'Are you goin' to wake up the next guard, or did you leave it to the hoss-wrangler?'

"'There won't be but one guard tonight,' he answers, 'an' we'll ride it. You might as well hunt for a hoss thief in heaven as look for that camp. Well, I guess I'll mosey round.' An' with that he quits me.

THE lightnin's playin' every little while. It ain't making much noise, but lights up enough to show where you're at. There ain't no use ridin'; by the flashes I can see that every head's down. For a second it'll be like broad day, then darker than the dungeons of hell, an' I notice the little fire-balls on my hoss's ears; when I spit there's a streak in the air like strikin' a wet match. These little fire-balls is all I can see of my hoss, an' they tell me he's listenin' all ways; his ears are never still.

"I tell you, there's something mighty ghostly about sittin' up on a hoss you can't see, with them two little blue sparks out in front of you wigglin' an' movin' like a pair of spook eyes, an' it shows me the old night hoss is usin' his listeners pretty plenty. I got my ears cocked, too, hearin' nothin' but Longrope's singin'; he's easy three hundred yards across the herd from me, but I can hear every word:

"Sam Bass was born in Injiana,
It was his native home,
'Twas at the age of seventeen
Young Sam began to roam.
He first went out to Texas,
A cowboy for to be;
A better hearted feller
You'd seldom ever see.

"It's so plain it sounds like he's singin' in my ear; I can even hear the click-clack of his spur chains against his stirrups.

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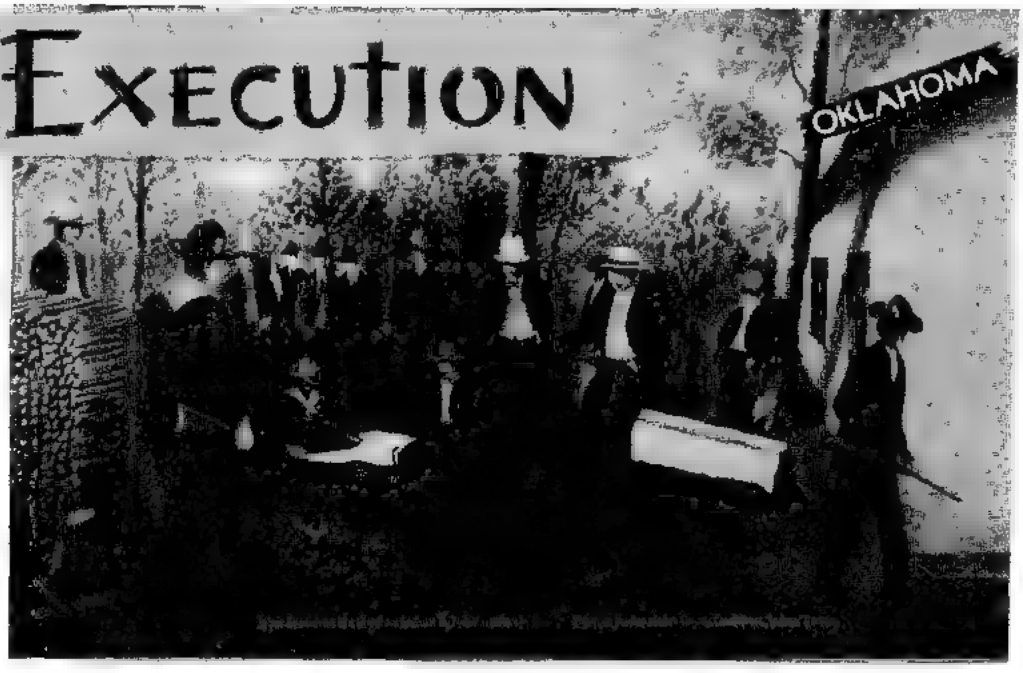
Choctaw Execution

By JAMES R. GRAY



This is a painting that Frank Raymond made of the execution scene and is authentic down to the smallest detail, we understand. It was drawn from the original photo which was too damaged for reproduction.

WE called them uncivilized savages. Yet what higher mark of civilization is there when a man's word of honor is as good as life itself?

You found that among the Choctaw Indians, member of the five civilized nations of Indians, back when the dwindling remnants of the once great tribe lived in a world of their own.

And it is doubtful if there was ever a more graphic demonstration of that word of honor than the story of Silan Lewis—the story of the way he met death.

I heard about it from Frank Raymond, a white man who knew Lewis, and who witnessed his death back in 1894. Raymond did more than witness it—he took a photograph of the scene soon afterward.

So from here on, it's Frank Raymond's story—just as he told it to me.

I was twenty-one when I moved to Hartshorne, a part of the Choctaw Nation. That whole country, later to become a part of Oklahoma of course, was known in those days as "Indian Territory." I was apprentice to a photographer named Doughten. We set up for business in a tent in the center of the little frontier coal-mining town.

One day, in the fall of 1894, a Choctaw Indian of about forty, and his wife—who was much younger and only part Indian—came into the studio. The man could talk very little English. The woman told me they wanted their picture taken, together.

"He is Silan Lewis," she said. "He doesn't have long to live."

I took a picture of the couple. After they were gone, I began to find out about Silan Lewis. It was hard for me to believe part of what I heard.

At that time the Choctaws had their own government—made their own laws and enforced them. Silan Lewis had been tried before a court of his own people and sentenced to death for the murder of another Choctaw named Joe Hoklotubbe. The killing took place because of a political fight. Lewis belonged to the Nationalists, Hoklotubbe to the Progressives. Members of the two parties had gotten into such a row that some of the nationalists went to Hoklotubbe's home one night and killed him.

Lewis was accused of being one of the killers. He was tried and sentenced. Then he was turned loose—free to go where he pleased until the day of execution. That was the part that was hard to believe. But Indians, living by their own codes, had a highly developed sense of honor. Lewis could be trusted to show up for his execution at the proper time, I was told.

I wanted a picture of the execution. So, on November 4, 1894, the day before the event, I got on a train and rode from Hartshorne to Red Oak. I stayed there that night, then hired a horse the next day and rode out to Brown's Prairie, the site of the execution. That is in the Kiamichi Mountain region of Southeastern Oklahoma, well known for its hunting and its scenery.

A man named John Elliott was my chance companion on the trip. We arrived before 10 a.m. and found a busy scene. The courthouse was a small box affair, about 24 by 36 feet. It had once been painted white, but it had faded to a dull gray. Beyond the courthouse was a creek. Smoke was rising from campfires along its banks. Horses and mules, buggies and wagons, were scattered over the landscape. People milled about the courthouse.

There were quite a few white people, but most of the crowd were Indians, forty of whom were carrying Winchesters. Those forty kept moving around in the crowd. They were Indian policemen, I found out.

Elliott and I dismounted and tied our horses. I set out with my photographic equipment and tried to get information about the execution. I didn't have much luck. Most of the Choctaws just grunted when I asked questions. When I made them understand about taking pictures, they shook their heads and began to get angry.

It was cold. Someone had built a big fire of logs. I got close to it and waited. The waiting seemed to go on and on. The Indians never seemed to notice this delay nor the cold. They just stood or sat, saying nothing, showing no excitement.

A few did come and gawk at my camera. It was a big box affair on a tripod. I was using 7 by 9 glass plates. I was afraid some of the Choctaws might damage my equipment, but they were content to just look.

No matter how quiet those Indians seemed, the tension was building up. Finally, a white man drifted up to the fire and told us that the judge was repeating the sentence. "Indian custom," the man said.

"I hear there's going to be trouble," another man remarked.

JUST about then an Indian came in riding fast from the north. His arrival created excitement and a flurry of talk in Choctaw. The armed policemen lined up on the north side of the courthouse. Some of them knelt, as though they were getting ready to shoot.

Elliott told me what the rider said then. Friends of the condemned man were demanding his release. So I picked up my camera and moved to the top of a small hill. Here the view was fine and I figured I wouldn't be in the line of fire if shooting started. I focused on the scene below and started waiting some more.

The excitement quieted down. Finally, I left the camera and joined the courthouse crowd again.

"They're going ahead with the execu-

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Recent photo of Frank Raymond, the man who witnessed the execution.

Honor so strong a man waits to be shot when freedom meant merely walking into the wilderness? That was honor back in 1894—Choctaw style, that is. . .

The Shelbys were a pretty tough bunch, but not tough enough to live with

The Door-Stop Skull

by MARTY KELLY

IN our part of the country, it was common knowledge that the Shelbys were a bad outfit. In every road-agent's den, in every rustler's hideout, on every owlhoot trail in old Montana history, one or more of the Shelby bunch rode with the pack. More often than not, they were the ringleaders, for they had good heads on their shoulders and there were many of them. They were notorious from the Black Hills to the Bear Paws, a sullen clan of tall, dark men with their women beside them. And the line was not about to run out. There were wiry, little boys who could shoot out a sparrow's eye and quiet, little girls in sunbonnets and high, button shoes hurrying busily around in the background.

The Shelby men loved their families and were fiercely protective of them. God help the man who courted a Shelby woman unless he was all man. God help him anyhow.

I cut my teeth on a bridle ring and went to sleep to the tales of the Shelbys' misdeeds for bedtime stories. In later years, yarns of the bunkhouse crew filled me with fear and fascination.

So, it was no wonder the whole peaceful valley was thrown into a turmoil when it was discovered, one morning, that the outlaw bunch was moving in up Highwood Creek. At first it was rumored around that they were inquiring after a piece of land about six miles from us. Nobody gave any credit to it. We had just about forgotten the incident, when someone reported there was something doing in the sunny, grassy meadow fringed with pine trees at the foot of old Baldy. Logs appeared from nowhere and, before we knew it, two big houses were going up, fast.

THEN one memorable morning about fifty head of young beef were trail-herded past our place on the way to the mountain pasture, and with them were the Shelby men. There were boys from ten years of age to old Bill, the white mustachioed old hawk who sat his saddle as straight and lithe as the young men, and as noncommittal. They drove the pretty, whiteface cattle easy; and while peeking through the hop vines on the front porch, I saw old Bill nod cordially to my father, who nodded as cordially back. Neither spoke. I was thrilled to see Dad stand and look over the herd appraisingly.

Weeks went by and nothing out of the way happened. I don't know what we expected, but surely it wasn't this calm business of legitimate ranching. The Shelbys put up good corrals and fenced their property. Their children started to school in the fall. We liked them. They had fun playing like any other kids, and they were good sports. We still heard the hair-raising tales about the bunch, but they came and went and never disturbed anyone living in the valley.

Now this part I got in later years, but I remembered the excitement of those months.

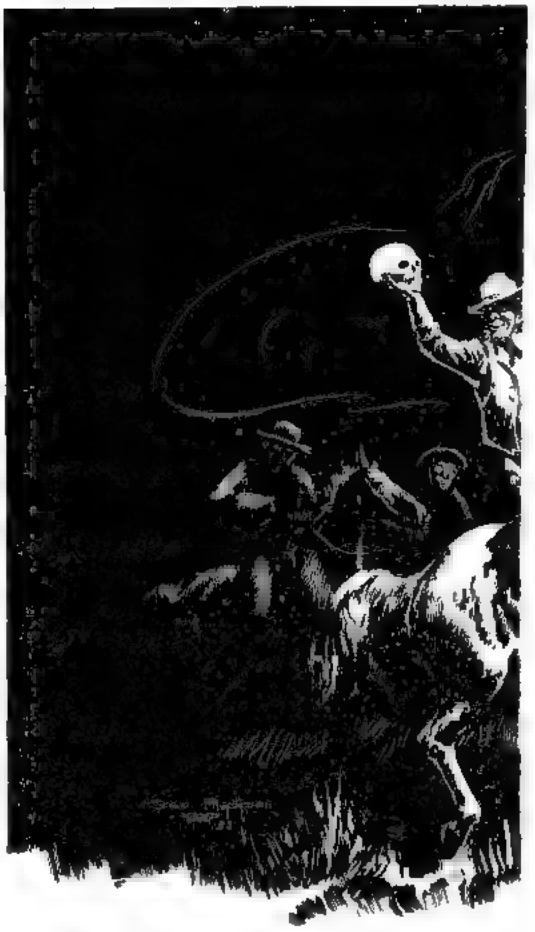
One night young Bill came thundering up the creek on a gaunt, lathered horse. He took to the hills in hiding. We all knew he was up there, but thought nothing of it till word got out that the stage between Sun River and Fort Benton had been held up where it forded the river above Dutton. On the stage was a fur buyer on his way to Benton to dicker with the Indians for their winter catch of pelts. He carried several thousand dollars in cash. While trying to conceal the gold-filled strong box, he was shot in the breast and almost bled to death. It turned out young Bill was with the hold-up men.

With the posse gathering behind them, the gang split up. Young Bill carried his share of the loot in the strong box and for some reason, stopped long enough to bury it on a rocky hillside not far from our house. He didn't know the place he chose was an Indian burying ground; and the first we knew of it was when the Shelbys got a new stop for their front door—a human skull.

After things quieted down, young Bill and some of the boys went down one dark night to collect the stolen cash. While digging, they uncovered the skull. Deciding to play a joke on the women folks they took the skull home with them. It came to rest as a door-stop in the house Old man Shelby was the only one who protested, and he did so violently.

"You young hellions are going to hear more about this!" he prophesied. "There's nothing worse than desecrating a graveyard. Even the Indians ride around it in respect. But not the Shelbys. They tear up a grave and bring home the cadaver to kick around a cabin floor. I'm telling you, take it back and bury it where you found it or bad luck will strike this outfit."

The young men guffawed and decided the old boy was leaning toward boot-hill himself. They kidded him and spooked the children till the women put a stop to it, but the skull remained by the door. Old Bill muttered about the wrath of the Almighty and moved his belongings to



a small cabin the family threw up for him under protest.

The Shelbys were a scattered and restless bunch. I don't think I ever saw them all together. They kept too much on the move. But they were quiet neighbors. We heard about the holdups and the shootings they were involved in at other points of the country, but it's one thing to hear something and another thing to see it. The sheriff was always nosing around the creek, asking questions.

SHORTLY after the appropriation of the Indian skull, a terrible thing happened. Two little Shelbys swimming in a beaver dam were drowned. I wasn't there, but I remember the sad funeral and the little graves fenced in the mountain pasture, across the road from their home.

Then there was a great upheaval in the family. Jed, who was a gay, handsome dog, ran off one night with his brother Tom's wife, a beautiful, spirited girl from Maiden Canyon. It seems Tom had lost his head and kidnapped her a year ago, and after forcibly seducing her, had married her. They all knew the story, and Jed had befriended her because she was not their "breed of cats." He fell madly in love with her and she with him. Rather than face the fury of a jealous husband and the ire of the family, they just ran off. To my knowledge, Tom never did catch up with them, though he was gone most of the summer. When he came back, he took to drinking and bragging and handling his .44 too carelesslike. That fall he was shot in the heart by a cowboy in Fort Benton. He died in the doorway of Tom Coatesworth's place, the Bucket of Blood saloon, and ten men swore it was self defense

Old Bill began to fail that fall when Jed run off. He was fond of Jed, because Jed was a chip off himself—wicked as hell but still a good fellow. The old man threatened dire things to come and darkly blamed the possession of the skull for the recent calamities. The family, nervous and edgy, said the skull was there to stay, come hell or perdition, and old Bill retired to his bunkhouse to brood.

That winter, the fateful winter of '93 when one terrible blizzard after another struck the cow country, you could walk from Highwood Creek to the Judith basin on the backs of dead, frozen cattle. A bunch of our cattle wintering in the sunny Judith Gap, drifted clear back to the Northwestern ranch at Montague in one storm and were put up and fed by a neighbor till the weather broke. People used to do things like that for each other. That's all that kept my father in the cow business. Ranchers all over the country went broke. The Shelbys lost every head they owned, but they started over, grim-lipped and calculating.

Just at the turn of spring their horse barn caught fire from a lightning bolt, and eleven saddle horses, the best running horses in the country, were burned to death. Horses become crazy things in a fire. The Shelbys couldn't get a one of their horses out. New horses were brought up the creek road, and the young boys went to breaking broncs. Then tragedy struck again.

Charlie Shelby, a fine lad of fifteen was thrown and tromped before his mother's eyes by an outlaw cayuse, and left a cripple. His legs were twisted and his handsome face was a shapeless mass. He never rode again, and he never went to school any more. The following summer he took a gun and blew his head off in the hayloft of the rebuilt barn.

Abe Shelby was lynched in Miles City and his heartbroken wife and kids went back to Missouri leaving the clan and the dust of Montana forever.

THEN the wives revolted en masse. They demanded some changes. They also demanded that young Bill take the plagued skull back where he got it. It was getting on everybody's nerves There were rumors of bitter quarrels in the family. Old Bill continually harped on the bad luck the skull was causing.

The Shelby women were all of good breeding, and good looking. How they married those renegades is beyond me, but their men were devoted to them. Rather than have mutiny at home, the men agreed to quit the lawless life and live peaceable. I suspect they promised with tongue in cheek, because they were of outlaw blood.

Young Bill, rather than give in on the graveyard business, left home and disappeared for several years. When he came back, he had a pretty woman from the Assiniboin nation where he had holed up. She was convent-educated and clean. Bill was well on his way to becoming a good citizen, but in the years to follow, bad luck dogged him. He raised a hell-roaring bunch of good-for-nothing, teepee, breed kids, who were dirty and shiftless and who finally broke his heart. He died of smallpox one winter in a lonely cabin, and his wife sat beside him till it was all over. Then she crawled close to his body and died, too She had caught the pox from him. The family set fire to the cabin with both bodies inside

Suddenly, the remaining Shelbys pulled up stakes and lit out. Just like that,

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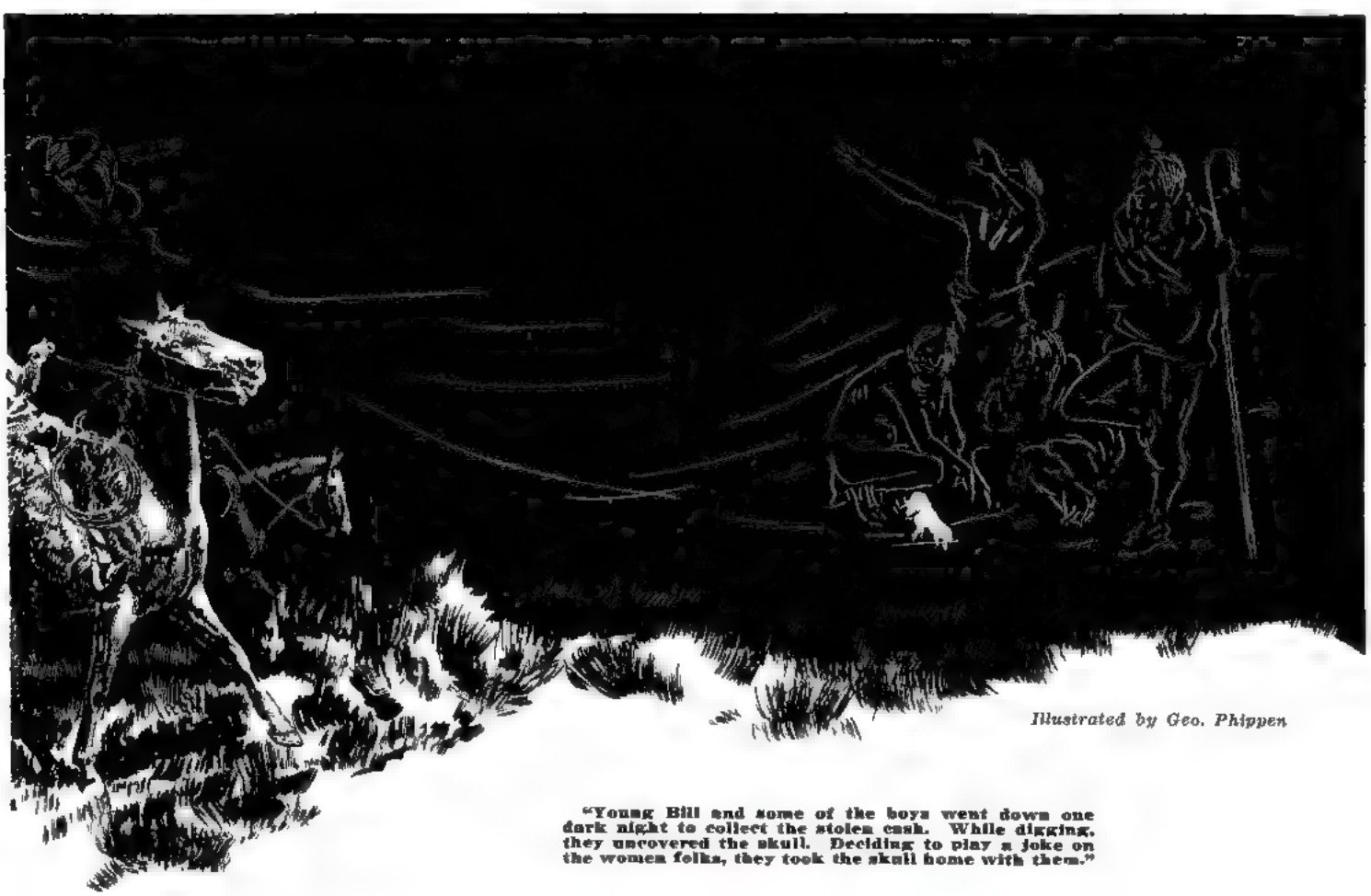
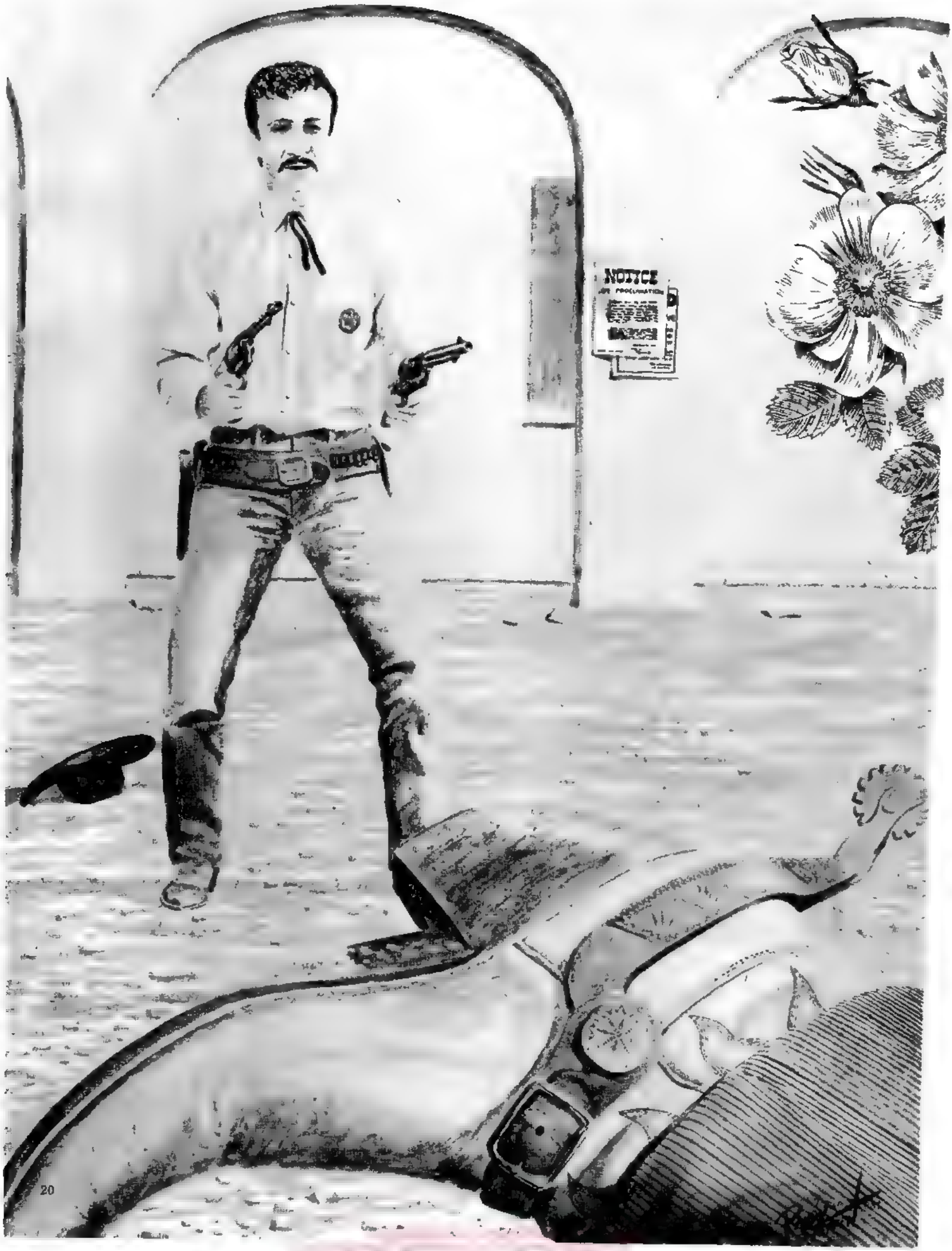


Illustrated by Geo. Phippen

"Young Bill and some of the boys went down one dark night to collect the stolen cash. While digging, they uncovered the skull. Deciding to play a joke on the women folks, they took the skull home with them."


NOTICE

GO HUNT UP A HYMNBOOK AND CUT A SPECIAL BOUQUET OF

flowers for CHARLEY McDANIELS

A TRUE WEST Classic

by FRED A. STONE

Illustrated by Randy Steffen

TEXAS

I REMEMBER the day that Charley McDaniels rode into town. I saw him coming down San Antonio Street. I didn't know who he was at the time, so I didn't pay him any special mind. To me, just a little old knot-head kid, piddling along the dusty, 'dobe-walled street when I should have been home an hour before, the sight of another tough-looking gun-hung rider meant nothing. Along in the 1890's his kind rode in and out of El Paso every day.

But few of his kind, or any other kind, had the sort of horse he rode. That's what caught my eye. I loved fine horses, and this was one of the finest I'd ever seen a big lanky, stocking-legged sorrel with a white star in his forehead He was hardly more than a colt, by the looks of him, yet he stepped along under the saddle with all the pride and assurance of a much older horse.

I stood and stared at the beauty of the sorrel and dreamed of the far-off time when I'd be big enough to own such a horse.

It wasn't till Dad arrived home, later in the day, that I learned the name of the man who rode the sorrel.

Dad (Lewis W. Stone) came into the house with his customary long, quick stride, calling to Mother: "Get dinner on the table as quick as you can, Reb. Got some business downtown that can't wait."

Dad always called Mother "Reb" because her maiden name had been Lee and she was the grandaughter of a general in the Confederate Army.

The extra cheerfulness in Dad's voice didn't fool Mother. She waited awhile, then asked quietly: "Who is it this time, Rocky?"

Dad's face sobered. "Charley McDaniels," he said, just as quietly, then added, as if to divert her thoughts: "Riding one of the finest sorrel horses I ever saw."

Mother turned to her cooking, and they said no more. But for me, they'd already said enough.

"He lay there, still and quiet, while the second man, bare-headed now, advanced cautionaly toward him, still holding a smoking gun in each hand."

I KNEW who Charley McDaniels was. I'd never seen him till he'd ridden past that morning on the star-faced sorrel, but I knew all about him. Kids learn things a lot faster than most grownups realize, and Dad had been United States Deputy-Marshal for the southwestern district of Texas too long for me not to know the names and general histories of most of the badmen in our part of the country.

And Charley McDaniels was bad. There was no doubt about that. He was as bad as they came. He was on the wanted list of every law enforcement officer within the radius of a thousand miles. He was half Irish and half Mexican.

His main specialties were horse-stealing, cattle-rustling, hiring out as a gunman in local range wars, and plain murder, for whatever price he could command. He was one of the few real badmen who never drank; his weaknesses ran to gambling and women. He loved the game of monte. He had a reputation for never cheating, but a still better one for gunning down any man who tried to cheat him. He preferred Mexican women to white ones and, generally, any time he wasn't to be found around a monte table, he'd be down in the red-light district, throwing his money around among the Mexican whores.

I felt a quick surge of excitement as I thought of Charley McDaniels' reputation as a gunman and killer, then recollected the choice Dad always issued to every badman who rode into El Paso: "Get out of town, go to jail, or go to Boot Hill."

Dad had made that order stick so far. In one instance, I'd been on hand to watch him do it. That was the time he put me behind a telegraph pole, with orders to stay there, then walked up to confront a drunken hoodlum who had a reputation for being mighty careless with his guns. Nothing had happened that time. Dad had merely talked for awhile, and finally the man had unbuckled his belt and handed over his guns. But I was betting it wouldn't be that way this time. Not with Charley McDaniels.

JUST why the possibility of a gunfight between my father and Charley McDaniels should have stirred me with a sort of exhilaration, instead of fear and dread, I'm not right sure now. I was young, but not too young to understand the danger to my father. The only explanation that I can give is the fact that in those days I was so inordinately proud of my father, so sure of his courage and ability to handle any situation, that I may have felt him invincible.

And looking back now, I still have the feeling that he was as nearly invincible as any man ever was.

I remember following him that day from the kitchen to the back porch, where he went to wash up for dinner. I remember how he looked, bent over the wash basin—the whole six-feet-two-inches-one-hundred-ninety-six-pounds of him. He was straight as an arrow, with broad thick shoulders and trim, gun-hung waist.

He was of Scotch-Irish and Indian origin: two kinds of Indian, Cherokee and Comanche. He looked more Indian than white, with his coppery skin, dark eyes and jet-black hair. Yet that hair must have been a throwback to some Scotch-Gaelic ancestor, for I never knew of a curly-headed Indian among either the Cherokees or the Comanches.

I remember how Dad always wound up his face-washings by trying to slick back that unruly hair with his wet hands and never having any luck. And I remember how he failed this time and gave me a solemn wink as he carried the washpan to the edge of the porch and splashed its contents into my mother's flower bed.

We ate. And while Dad did a lot of talking, there was nothing more said about Charley McDaniels. When he rose, Dad said, "I won't be gone long, Reb," and left the house, walking as casually as if he'd been going out to shoe a horse.

What happened downtown right after that, I didn't learn about in detail until years later; so many years later, in fact, that no doubt some of those details were minimized or exaggerated. Yet with all its many tellings, the main story has never varied much, so that what I tell here can't be far off-track.

DAD searched first among the whore houses, but if the gunman had visited there, the Mexican girls wouldn't admit it. Which didn't surprise Dad. After all, McDaniels was young, not hard for a woman to look at, and was a free spender. Why should the girls give him away to a peace officer who made a habit of killing or jailing or running out of town some of their very best customers?

It wasn't till Dad entered the Gem saloon on El Paso Street that he got wind of his man. McDaniels, according to one talkative elbow-bender, had just left, headed for the Ranch saloon a block or so down the street.

Dad left the Gem through the back door. He hurried down an alley and entered the Ranch saloon through one of the little wine-rooms that were reserved for family-drinking, women not

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ED TO UNZOR
DUCTION PROHBITED

Old Smokey Joe.

SMOKEY JOE

Ever have an Indian shoot you in the head, then cut a ring off your finger? Come on now—no fibbing! No? Well, you might'uv —if you'd lived back in the "good old days."

By A. M. HARTUNG

Photo by the Author

SLOWLY but surely the frontier is drying up. There are still wilderness spots —"last frontier" retreats, but modern civilization has left little that still looks like it did in the "old days"—really nothing that "acts" like the old frontier.

And, of course, the authentic old timers are about gone, too. Whenever I find one of these old fellows who isn't a "blow hard" and who tells about the old days in simple narrative form, neither adding to or taking from, I can listen for days.

Smokey Joe was one of these old timers. He had seen service as a plainsman, as a mountain man, a fur trapper, scout and guide. Joe had worked on the open range. He had seen the snows of 80-odd winters. Several times he had acted as guide for emigrant trains going overland from the Missouri river to the Pacific Coast

Old Joe and his ancient briar pipe were inseparable. Let him cram its worn bowl with tobacco, light it and draw heavily on the battered stem, and his memory opened up. His mind would begin to back track.

There was a finger missing from his right hand. Always someone would ask about it. Old Joe would smile and a gleam come into his eyes. From now on it's old Smokey Joe himself talking.

NOW, that finger that you don't see—it carried two brass rings years ago I got them off a little Crow Injun I shot before he could hit me. I slipped the rings on my finger. They was too small, but by forcing a little I got them on. The joint of my fingers swelled up later on and I never could take them off again.

I thought they was there for keeps.

I had a pardner in them days called "Tetom Tom." He was the best friend I ever had. We was running our traps up in Wyoming one frosty morning. Tom was a short ways up the creek in the brush. I was taking a bobcat out of my trap when an Injun shot me through the hair on top of my head. It plumb plowed a furrow through my scalp and knocked me cold.

I bled like a stuck hog, but was just stunned. The Injun thought he'd killed me. He was just fixing to scalp me when he seen them brass rings on my finger. I was lying face down in the blood and dirt. He decided to get them rings first —scalping could wait.

But they wouldn't come off over the joint. He began whittling the joint with his scalping knife. I felt something as I was coming back to consciousness, but I laid still, clamped my teeth, and played possum.

The Injun cut off the joint, slipped the bloody rings off, and put them on his own finger. He was now ready to scalp me.

Smokey in action. Photo taken in 1908.

I heard the bullet as it hit him. It was a sort of "whack" like you'd spank a fat baby's rump. He slumped over me. I got out from under him quick, and looked around to see Tom hurrying up. I told him, "Man, I was never so glad to see a friend in my life!"

Tom tied a buckskin string around the finger to stop the blood. The finger soon healed up, and I never missed it at all. I'd never think of it even now if someone didn't call my attention to it.

TOM was a crack shot, the best hunter I ever worked with. He sure loved hosses. I learned a lot about them from him. Tom told me once, "Joe, a hoss knows mor'n a man might think. Never spur a hoss where he don't want to go. There's lots of times a hoss knows a heap mor'n a man." I used to lie back with a good pipe and listen to Tom talk about hosses by the hour.

Most hosses are good swimmers, but if you want to play safe in swimming a hoss, loosen the cinches and pull off the bridle as he goes into the water. You may not come out just where you wanted to on the other side—BUT YOU'LL COME OUT. Many a fellow has drowned himself and his hoss by pulling on the reins. If you're lost in a blizzard, give your hoss his head —a hoss don't get lost out in the open.

A hoss loves the range where he was born. A plains hoss hates the mountains. I like to watch 'um in fly time—they'll bunch up heads to tails, each hoss using his pardner's tail for a fly-brush.

They all love pure, cold running water. Most drink with their heads upstream—each hoss trying to get above the rile.

Most other animals hide their young when they go for water. But when a colt is born, his mother never leaves him. Hosses stay in bands so wolves don't have much chance. When wolves show, the hosses bunch up. They won't run, and they're dangerous at both ends. Once a wolf feels the hoofs of a range mare, it sort of takes his appetite.

THEM early day "free trappers" was a wild bunch. Once a year these old trappers had a "blow out" in some hidden valley. They had one helluva dangerous pastime known as "shootin' the cup." This was shooting a cup of liquor off each other's head. They'd flip a coin for the first shot.

Once, on the Yellowstone River, three trappers agreed to hunt and trap together for a few months' time. To celebrate the pact, they decided to shoot the cup.

Later on, they had some trouble over an Injun woman. Finally, a sort of peace was patched up but it looked shaky. Again, to celebrate peace in camp, they decided to shoot the cup. The two that was contesting over the Injun woman flipped a coin. The winner placed a cup of liquor on the other's head, stepped back 50 feet, turned and shot the man in the center of the forehead. He claimed at once that it was a pure accident. But the third trapper pulled his revolver and shot the killer through the heart. A few

(Continued on page 42)

Wild Old Days

Stew for Uncle Monty

By ILA H. HEALY

IN the early 1900's, men patrolling the border between Mexico and the United States were known as "Line Riders."

Glenn Chalmers was one of those early line riders. The Patrol rode in pairs in those days, as they do today. Glenn's sidekick was a rarity in the country—a would-be lady-killer. He was tall, lanky, loose-jointed and sported handlebar moustaches. He always wore white shirts with a black, shoestring tie. He was even sweet-scented. Nearing fifty, he was still a bachelor. "Handsome Jim" Gimble they called him.

Points of patrol were many miles apart, and the mode of travel was slow. Glenn had an old adobe shack at ranch "80" at the south end of the Huachuca Mountains, in the southeastern part of Arizona. He and "Handsome Jim" rode out in the morning, back in the evening—one day to the east, the next to the west.

Their larder was always well stocked with wild game—doves, pigeons, quail, rabbits and always squirrels. Glenn's pride and joy was his squirrel stew.

No one knew better than Uncle Monty, the veteran old hunter of bear and mountain lion, how strictly a mouth-watering dish this stew was. If necessary, he would ride four days, three without food, to arrive in time to slide his feet under the table for this special Chalmers concoction.

He had an uncanny way of riding up on his flop-eared mule, followed by his various breeds of hounds, at just the right moment for a free meal—not once, but increasingly often. Not to have fed the old man would have been a decided breach of western hospitality. It did get a bit monotonous. Glenn cast around in his mind for a remedy. He came up with a brilliant idea.

ON Glenn's next trip to LaNoria, their headquarters and source of supplies, he bought the customary grub—horseshoes and nails, ammunition, gun oil, perfumed shaving soap for "Handsome Jim" and a new, gray enameled receptacle. This he diligently scrubbed and put carefully aside on his arrival back at camp.

Uncle Monty, as expected, arrived the next evening on schedule, hot on the scent of the delectable stew—this time pigeon. He slid off his low-withered mule, looked expectantly at the door, opened it and edged in. He inhaled the heavenly aroma, and hung his dingy hat on a nail. Settling himself comfortably on a handy bunk, Uncle Monty began telling of his latest hunting escapades.

"Where in the devil are the pots and pans? Can't find a damn thing to mix Uncle Monty a batch of biscuits in," Glenn said

With a wicked gleam in his eyes, he eased over to his bunk, stooped and pulled out the gray enameled vessel. This he carried, arm extended, to the door. He threw out its amber-colored liquid, hitting one of the sad-eyed hounds full in the face. Turning, Glenn set diligently to work mixing his dough—without even so much as rinsing out the pot.

Uncle Monty stared with astonished disbelief. He'd taken it in from Glenn's reaching-under-the-bed to following the curve of the amber contents through the air—even the insult to the hound. The old man acted swiftly.

Eyes agog, he pulled himself up, gulped once, grabbed his battered hat, gave a brief, inadequate excuse for his hurry, eased himself over to the door and slipped out, appetite gone. Muttering, Uncle Monty mounted his mule and was off.

Uncle Monty stared in astonished disbelief.

"Handsome Jim" looked at his meticulous pardner in pained surprise.

"Tea," was Glenn's laconic reply.

GETTING EVEN

By A R SHOEMAKER

BACK in 1899, Ab Blankenship ran a crossroads general store in the Cherokee Nation, about five miles east of the Verdigris River. It was one of those old-time stores where almost anything could be purchased. It also served as a gathering place for the young cowboys who worked on the surrounding ranches.

The main attraction in Ab's store, at least for the young neighborhood cowpokes, were his two daughters. They were not raving beauties by any great shakes, nor were they homely. But Laura and Vera Blankenship were blessed with friendly ways and pleasant personalities that made them mighty popular.

Old Ab was their stepfather, and owned the reputation of being the stingiest man in the Cherokee Nation. He allowed credit to no one, and asking him for a donation to a worthy cause was about like asking a cowboy to milk a cow. It was rumored that Ab still had the first dollar he ever made. He was, of course, the exact opposite of the free-spending cowboys who often stopped in the store to eat crackers, sardines, cheese and canned peaches, and talk to Vera and Laura. Ab put up with it as long as money was changing hands, but the minute it stopped, it was: "Git out and quit pesterin' my daughters!" This really riled up some of the boys, but they held their tempers out of respect for the girls.

Lon Sanders, who worked for the Watson Double C outfit, was one of the more frequent visitors to the store. Most of the time he could be seen talking with Laura, and it didn't take much imagination to see how the wind was blowing in that direction. Old Ab saw it, too, for he took special pleasure in ridiculing Lon just because he was Laura's favorite beau. Naturally he'd take Lon's money, but he sure expressed his opinion out loud about how he didn't want no broken-down cowboy sparkin' *his* girl.

This wasn't fair to Lon, for he was a well-liked and hard-working boy. He had a working interest with the owners of the Double C and eventually became a ranch owner himself. However, at this time he was just an ordinary cowhand.

The rest of the cowboys that hung around the store figured that Lon would soon tire of Ab's irritating remarks and bust the old man right square in the mouth. They didn't know for a long time just how Lon got even. When they did hear about it, they retold the story so often it became a cow camp classic.

ONE afternoon two boys came into the store carrying a boxed cake. They told Ab they were selling cakes for the benefit of the sixth grade at the school down the road. Ab started to crawfish, but the cowboys who happened to be in the store—encouraged by Lon Sanders—began to yell "Tightwad, skinflint, poor sport!"

The razzing got under Ab's skin. The boys were only asking fifty cents for the cake, but Ab was so mad he paid them a dollar. The look of pain on the old boy's face lessened somewhat, however, when he opened the box and looked at the cake. It was a delicious looking layer cake, covered all over with rich, creamy chocolate icing. "Well now," chuckled Ab, "I guess I ain't been hooked much after all! Me and the missus are havin' company for supper tonight and this cake will sure hit the spot for dessert."

Well, sir, after supper that night, Mrs. Blankenship placed the cake in front of Ab for him to cut and serve. He picked up the knife and cut down through the thick icing, smiling in anticipation. Just as he lifted out the first wedge, he looked down, paled, dropped the knife and stomped from the room. There, in all its aromatic glory, lay a cake made of dried cow chips!

(Continued on page 42)

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"Water! For God's sake—water!" the agonized plea came in a hoarse whisper. But they didn't give him water. With less compassion than he would have shown a rattlesnake, Johnson raised his gun and put a bullet between the fugitive's eyes.

A GHOST NAMED JONES

By DEAN CONRAD

Illustrated by James T. Jones

They thought he was dead, those hot-heads of Nelson. Slumped in the bottom of a heat-blasted retreat, bloodshot eyes rolling feebly in their gaunt sockets, clothes matted with blood, they'd seen Jones get shot full in the face. But did he die? He was reported seen in blood-caked dungarees pleading for water, wandering through rough canyons, lurking in the shadows around lonely campfires, and haunting the Queen City mine—dad-gum, but this'n's a woolie-booger!

HARPS and halos weren't standard equipment at any of the frontier mining camps, but the boom towns of Nelson and Eldorado, Nevada, were more than plain tough. They were trouble camps—jinx camps. Mines were reputedly haunted. There wasn't a tunnel in the canyon that didn't seem to carry the Indian sign. Men fought without reason killed and died without knowing why.

A few of the inhabitants began to call it the Eldorado Curse, or the Old Spanish Curse. But for the most part, Nelson simply wagged its head knowingly and thought about the ghost named Jones . . .

It is common practice to label frontier settlements "lawless." At Nelson and Eldorado, however, it was more than a figure of speech—it was dire, incontestable fact. Between these neighboring towns, and their county seat of Pioche, there stretched 160 miles of desert and scorching *mal pais*.

Before word could be carried from Eldorado Canyon to Pioche, and response made by the sheriff, even a spectacular killing was forgotten, the victim buried and the killer lynched or lauded, as public opinion demanded

It was this complete absence of law and order which was responsible for the organizing of Nelson's first vigilante committee . . . and it was the vigilantes who were responsible for the ghost named Jones.

The trouble started when John Nash, of the Eldorado Mining Company, determined to acquire the Queen City claim adjacent to his holdings. It wasn't his intention to purchase the Queen but to jump it. He engaged a trio of gunslingers —Bill Piette, a renegade; Jim Harrington, a California gunfanner; and Jim Jones, a half-breed Piute. According to the agreement, Nash was to pay the men $5,000 each to deliver the claim into his hands.

The deadline for performing annual assessment work was drawing near when the Queen City's non-resident owner sent a representative to take care of the labor necessary to hold the claim. With this emissary neatly eliminated by a few strategically placed shots, it became a simple matter to hold the Queen until the assessment deadline had expired, after which the mining claim was automatically thrown open for refiling.

"Jones' ghost was seen here and there—wearing blood-caked dungarees and pleading for water."

WITH the Queen in his possession, Nash became greedy. Nobody knows for sure, but it is believed that he entered into a side agreement with Piette to kill Jones and Harrington. With that detail out of the way, it is possible that he intended personally to liquidate Piette, thereby silencing his confederate in murder and retaining for himself the mine as well as the fifteen grand.

Even though the prelude is somewhat vague and controversial, old timers of the area are reasonably agreed concerning the ultimate payoff.

Jones was washing his face one morning when Piette stepped up behind him and raised his gun to fire. Apparently sensing his danger, the half-breed whirled half around as the gun barked. The .45 slug, intended for his back, caught him in the side.

Only momentarily stunned, Jones snatched up the heavy powder keg, on which the washpan had been setting. He broke it over Piette's head, sending him reeling to the floor. Jones then grabbed his gun and fired a single shot into his assailant.

All this had been done spontaneously, as a man might slap at a bumblebee which was biting him. Now that he had time to think, Jones remembered how Nelson's bloodthirsty vigilantes had dealt with the last half-breed suspected of killing a white man. It had been a demonstration calculated to inspire proper fear in the souls of all half-breeds . . .

Jones didn't loiter around to see if the same treatment would be meted out to him. At the moment distance seemed far preferable to discussion. He took to the desert hills, and with him he took Piette's Winchester.

Aroused by the shots, camp residents soon discovered the seriously-wounded Piette, who, upon being restored to consciousness, related his version of the

Ruins of "Techatticup" mine near ghost town of Nelson, in Eldorado Canyon, Clark County, Nevada. It is possibly the oldest mine in Nevada, having been worked by Spaniards as early as 1775.

affray. Quite naturally, it was a version guaranteed to send the vigilantes in red-eyed pursuit of the 'breed.

Tracking was made easy by the crimson trail Jones left in his wake. With the blazing desert sun beating on his head and the gaping wound in his side continuing to leak like a perforated waterbag, the weakening fugitive soon realized that further flight was impossible. His only hope was to make a stand, and perhaps the night would bring some means of escape.

In this particular section of the desert there was neither brush nor large boulders to supply cover, but there was an abandoned prospect hole. Gratefully, Jones tumbled into it. It was only a shallow hole but, by crouching carefully against one side, he could effectually screen himself from the advancing vigilantes, now less than a half-mile behind.

It was only a matter of minutes until the citizens' posse had surrounded the improvised breastworks; but there action ceased. Despite his injury, the 'breed's aim was still authoritative.

FOR two days and two nights the beleaguered fugitive huddled in the precarious safety of his shallow pit, cooked and frozen by turns. He had neither food nor water. As morning of the third day broke over the desert, the man's thirst, and the throbbing pain of his infected wound, were no longer endurable. Ripping a section from his bloody shirt, Jones knotted it to the barrel of Piette's Winchester and elevated it in token of surrender.

His gun held at ready and a dozen other rifles covering his advance from the rear, Tom Johnson warily approached the prospect hole. Coming to a halt on the rim, he looked down upon a revolting sight.

Slumped in the bottom of that heat-blasted retreat was the tragic lump of what had been a man. Blood-shot eyes rolling feebly in their gaunt sockets, Jones' clothing was matted with blood, the wound in his side was crawling with flies and vermin, his lips parched and cracked by fever.

"Water! For God's sake—water!" the agonized plea came in a hoarse whisper.

But the vigilantes didn't give him water. With less compassion than he might have shown a rattlesnake, Johnson raised his gun and put a bullet between the fugitive's eyes.

Satisfied that there was no longer threat of danger, other members of the vigilante committee scrambled up the slope to swarm around the hole. A half dozen additional shots were pumped into the prostrate heap. A little sand and a few rocks were kicked over the body, and Jones' sanctuary became his grave.

Jones was dead and Jones was gone . . . but Jones was not soon forgotten.

IN the first place, Piette didn't die. In the second place, he and Harrington told such widely-conflicting tales that the townsfolk began suspecting that Piette's original account of the shooting hadn't been altogether gospel.

And, before long, those who had contributed most to Jones' death were experiencing conscience trouble—trouble which manifested itself in the usual fashion.

Jones' ghost was seen here! Jones' ghost was seen there! Wearing blood-caked dungarees and pleading for water, it allegedly wandered through the rough canyons bordering the Colorado River, or came to lurk in the shadows around lonely campfires. In particular Jones' ghost was supposed to haunt the Queen City mine.

Nash became half petrified with terror when darkness threatened to overhaul him in the vicinity of the mine. Jones' ghost, it seemed, had a distressing habit of emerging from the tunnel to stalk silently and accusingly at his side.

Not only through the medium of strange tales, but by unexplainable accidents, the kidnapped mine eventually fell into such bad repute that workmen refused to enter its underground chambers. For all his elaborate conniving, Nash found himself stuck with a white elephant, only slightly used but completely jinxed.

With the half-breed's death, not only Nash and the Queen City, but all of Nelson and Eldorado seemed to fall under the curse of blood. Old Man Davis, owner of the Bridal Chamber mine, was mysteriously murdered for no apparent reason. Next, it was "Cap" Fuller, part owner of the Eldorado. Soon afterward, a prominent man named Jim Warren was found dead in the street, a slug in his head. Suspicion seemed to point toward Piette, but there was no proof.

Retribution, guilty minds began whispering — grim, bloody retribution. It was the wronged Jones' spirit, his ghost that had come back to plague those who had shown him no mercy—to put a curse of blood and death throughout that whole country. It was directly responsible for the series of killings that had beset the hapless desert area. This suspicion persisted, grew stronger.

And so it went, a killing-or-so a month until 1897 when a sober, good-natured

(Continued on page 30)

Two hundred miles of this kind of country separated the two hell camps of Nelson and Eldorado from law. No wonder they were ruled by law of the .45!

"One horse got spooked, jumped between the team, straddled the wagon tongue—and the hell opened!"

Ostrich Stampede

"I'd sure like to ride one of them ridic'lous birds!" Smokey said. Five minutes later he did . . .

By HERB WOOD

Illustrated by George Phippen

SMOKEY and I left Williams, Arizona, with twenty head of horses to take to the Imperial Valley for the winter. We were going to do some trading and selling

It took us three days to get to Phoenix, where we put our horses in the feed lot at Six Points. Next morning early we took off. We had two pack-horses, one with our bed roll, the other with our kitchen and chuck.

We were about four miles south of Phoenix, going down a road fenced with wire on both sides. On one side was a field of alfalfa; on the other was a herd of ostriches, about six hundred of them. We stopped to look at them—to see what they had that a turkey didn't. Smokey or I had never seen an ostrich. They were as tall as our horses, their necks were as long as a giraffe's, they had long legs and big feet. Smokey said that he would like to ride one. Little did he think his wish would come true!

We saw some men hauling in a big load of hay to grind up for the birds They were a couple hundred yards off, coming our way. The ostriches got curious to see what our pack horses were. They were running in a circle, winding up like cattle after a stampede. One bird lined out to look us over. The rest were tromping on his heels.

We had a horse that was only half broken, and afraid of his shadow. He got spooked, ran into one of the teams that were hauling hay, got in between the horses, astraddle of the wagon tongue, tipped the load of hay over, broke the tongue out, and away they went, looking for another country that wasn't so wild. Then the other team ran too, and missed the culvert across the irrigation ditch. Most of the hay and the man went into the water.

Our horses stampeded through the fence among the ostriches. The horse with the kitchen pack hung up on a post, tore the pack open, and got in among the birds. He was bucking and squealing. Pots and pans were rattling and flying through the air. The first thing I knew I was right in the middle of the stampede

I was leaning over the brow-band and going to town, when my horse jumped into a hole, turned over and threw me over his head. I landed on my belly. Just as I got to my feet, an ostrich ran over my horse. He got tangled up in the bridle reins, and stood on his head, but finally straightened up.

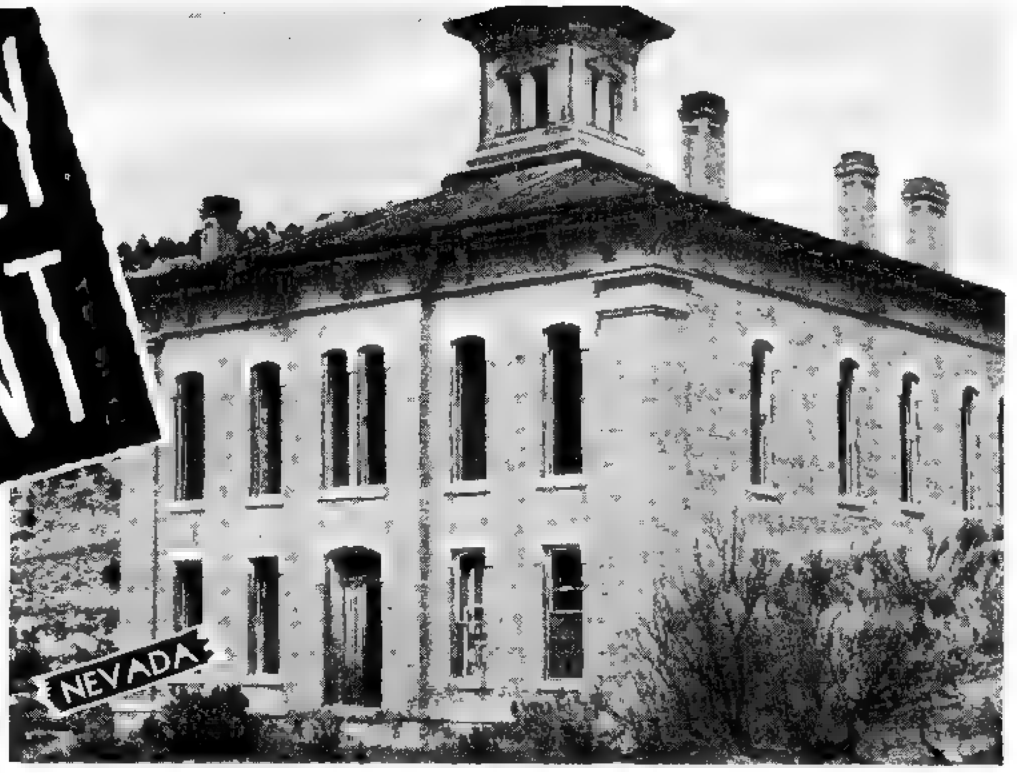
I grabbed the bird by the neck with both hands, and jumped astraddle of him. I was dizzy and about half out of wind. Then I commenced to see things. It looked to me like I was in the middle of the ocean. Wave after wave of birds was before my eyes when I could see straight. I had a death grip on his neck, and was sitting pretty. Just then an old bird reached out his long neck, and grabbed a mouthful of my ear. He pulled it out about six inches, lost his hold, and my ear snapped back, nearly knocking my head off.

THE old bird I was on was getting close to the outer edge of the stampede, and the irrigation ditch close to the culvert. When he got opposite the culvert, I jumped off and rolled into the ditch, grabbed hold of the culvert and hung on till the drags came by.

I crawled out looking like a drowned rat and felt like one, too. As soon as I got the water out of my hair and eyes, I could see the ostriches were swinging back my way. I crossed over the ditch,

(Continued on page 40)

GHOSTLY BELMONT



By NELL MURBARGER

Ghosttown! The word itself holds a certain fascination. This is one in a series of famous old ghosttowns of the West.

Old Nye County courthouse in ghosttown of Belmont, Nevada. Brick used in this building was ox-freighted over the Sierra Nevadas from Sacramento, California.

GHOST TOWN

By
Edythe Hope Genee

Lingering shafts of a parching desert sun
Cast eerie shadows on the crumbling walls;
An air of brooding stillness hovers close,
Unbroken by sound or voice of man,
A door bangs loosely on a rusty hinge,
As dusk creeps forward through the purple sage,
And high Sierras, etched in saffron mist,
Press nearer to the moldy parapets

O song of ages past—is this the clay
That once was Angels Camp and proud Belmont?
When wine flowed free—when lips and laughing eyes
Flashed through these dusty desert corridors!
Where are they now—the feet that walked these streets?
Do paths of gold still lure them farther on,
Or stay their steps beneath the burning sky.
To a muted silence in this painted sand!

TUCKED into remote mountain ranges of the West are hundreds of deserted mining camps. Some of them were fantastically rich. Others never expanded beyond a single dusty street fringed with sagging hitchrails and tar-papered shacks. These old ghost towns stand unique in our nation's development. The world had never known such cities before, and their like will never come again

While Belmont, Nevada, never attained the international notoriety of Virginia City, Tombstone or Deadwood, it was a great old camp. She was rich and reckless; she had verve and vigor

Gazing today upon her crumbled ruins and age-mellowed stone walls, it is difficult to realize that, in this setting of sagebrush and juniper, sleeps one of Nevada's first cities.

With the fabulous strike on Sun Mountain (still a main topic of conversation wherever mining men congregated) there fanned out over Nevada's desert a vast army of prospectors, every man hoping to locate a second Comstock.

As a result of this treasure-mad hegira, an important strike was made on the east slope of the Toquima Mountains in 1863, and the town of Belmont developed with a bang. From a lone prospector's tent her population skyrocketed almost overnight to 6,000 persons. Within two years she was casting covetous eyes upon the Nye county seat, then situated in the mining camp of Ione, 50 airline miles away.

The territory governed from Ione was larger than several Eastern states combined, Nye county's domain then spreading from the California border on the west to Utah Territory on the east and to Arizona Territory on the south. To the north, only one county separated it from Idaho. It was potentially rich in mineral wealth.

As a result of pressure brought on by Belmont, the state legislature in 1867 acceded to her demands. Over the vehement protests of Ione, the county seat was given to the new town.

Having just financed a new courthouse at Ione, taxpayers of Nye county were not enthusiastic about starting the immediate construction of a second new edifice at Belmont. So county offices were shunted from one store building to another. Not until 1874 was the erection of a new courthouse begun.

At Belmont's high elevation the working season is comparatively short, and two years had passed before the building was ready for dedication.

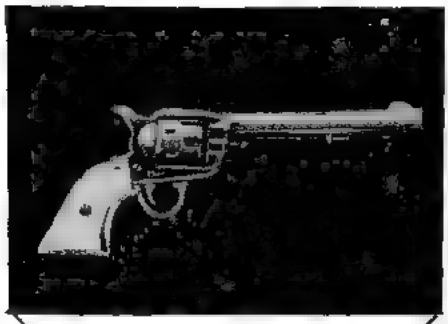
Standing foursquare to the mountain winds, proud Belmont saw the structure as a fit memorial to those indomitable men who had settled in this remote section more than a decade before. Two stories in height and surmounted by a well-proportioned dome, it was built of expertly-laid brick hauled laboriously by freight teams over the Sierras from Sacramento, California.

Occupying a considerable portion of the new building's ground floor was a formidable jail which offered distinct advantages over the crackerbox-type structure previously employed as a calaboose. Not only had the old jail figured in several spectacular escapes, but prisoners domiciled in it were afforded practically no protection from mob violence.

Among the more notable episodes in which the temporary jail had figured was the escape and subsequent lynching of Charlie McIntyre and Jack Walker, a couple of Pennsylvania coal miners.

Soon after their arrival, the pair got in an argument with H. H. Sutherland, a local citizen. The discussion

The old Cosmopolitan Music Hall. In the '60's and '70's, Fay Templeton and other celebrated thespians played here.



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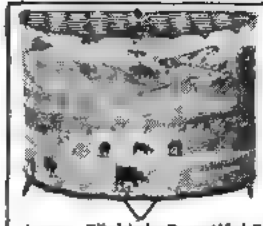

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culminated in gunplay, Sutherland being wounded by Walker. The latter was subsequently arrested, jailed in lieu of bailbond, and bound over to await action by the next grand jury.

The shooting had occurred May 20, 1874. On May 31, the pair made their escape from the flimsy jail. "A penknife or similar instrument was used to make a hole through the back wall," satirized the Belmont *Courier*

Two days later the men were found hiding in an abandoned mine shaft by Sheriff Jim Caldwell and were returned to jail.

About 12 o'clock that night the sheriff's office was filled suddenly with purposeful men. Disarming and binding Caldwell and his deputy, P. E. Turner, the delegation removed both prisoners from their cells and escorted them to the basement of the makeshift courthouse. Boring a quartet of holes in the first floor above, ropes were strung over the joists and their free ends knotted around the victims' necks.

When the sheriff and his deputy were subsequently discovered and released from their bonds by Night Watchman Gates, the trio hurried below where they found McIntyre and Walker hanging inertly from the basement ceiling. Pinned to the sweat-encrusted back of each man's shirt was a piece of paper bearing the notation "301"—signature of the Vigilantes.

WHILE violent death was never long absent from young Belmont, what was perhaps her least laudable episode occurred in the spring of 1867. At that time the Nevada mines were worked largely by Cornish and Irish emigrants. Between the two factions lay an ages-old feud transplanted to this country from Bantry Bay and Land's End.

When closure of the Silver Bend mine at Belmont was ordered by Eastern directors, Irish miners employed there flamed with immediate suspicion. Work had been progressing well and there had been no indication of diminishing ore bodies. The men immediately interpreted this move as only a token close-down. Upon reopening, so rumor spread, the mine would be restaffed with Cornish labor, then procurable at a lower wage.

As the unfounded rumor gained momentum, blood grew hotter. By nightfall a surging mob had overpowered and kidnapped Tom Canfield, manager of the Silver Bend. Uncomfortably perched astride a rail borne on burly Irish shoulders, the perspiring Canfield was paraded through Belmont's main street. Halting at each saloon en route, the unruly throng collected liquid fortifications and additional recruits.

As drunkenness and mob hysteria mounted, Canfield's captors grew in viciousness until the taunts and ridicule heaped upon him struck new lows in obscenity. When his bearers elected to celebrate with their fellows at Highbridge saloon, Canfield was dumped from the rail to be held under gunpoint guard. Later as preparations were made to resume march, the mine boss was ordered to climb back on the rail.

"If you do not choose to get on that rail, Mr. Canfield, you need not do so, you know." It was a gentleman's voice and the words were spoken quietly and pleasantly; yet something in their timbre caused them to be heard above the drunken orgy.

Wheeling to determine the source of this unexpected opposition, the seething miners beheld Louis M. Bodrow, a former marshal at Austin, and a friend of many of those in the mob. Standing close by Canfield's side, Bodrow returned the men's hostile stares with calm contempt.

Voicing a foul oath, a miner by the name of Pat Digman lashed out at the ex-marshal, his iron-hard fist smashing full into the other's face.

By way of adding to the melee, another mobster discharged his pistol. Within seconds, the dark mountain street was a roaring hell of haphazard gunfire, flashing knives and flying haymakers.

WHEN sheer exhaustion brought the fight to a close, it was found that the mine boss had been rescued by friends and spirited away. Scores of miners had been wounded. In widening pools of blood in the street lay Bodrow and Digman, both dead.

To fix direct responsibility for Bodrow's death was impossible, since his body was virtually riddled with bullet holes and stab wounds. Of the two shots which had been fired from his pistol, apparently one had brought death to Digman.

Returned to his home city of Austin, the former law officer was buried with full military honors by the Lander guard.

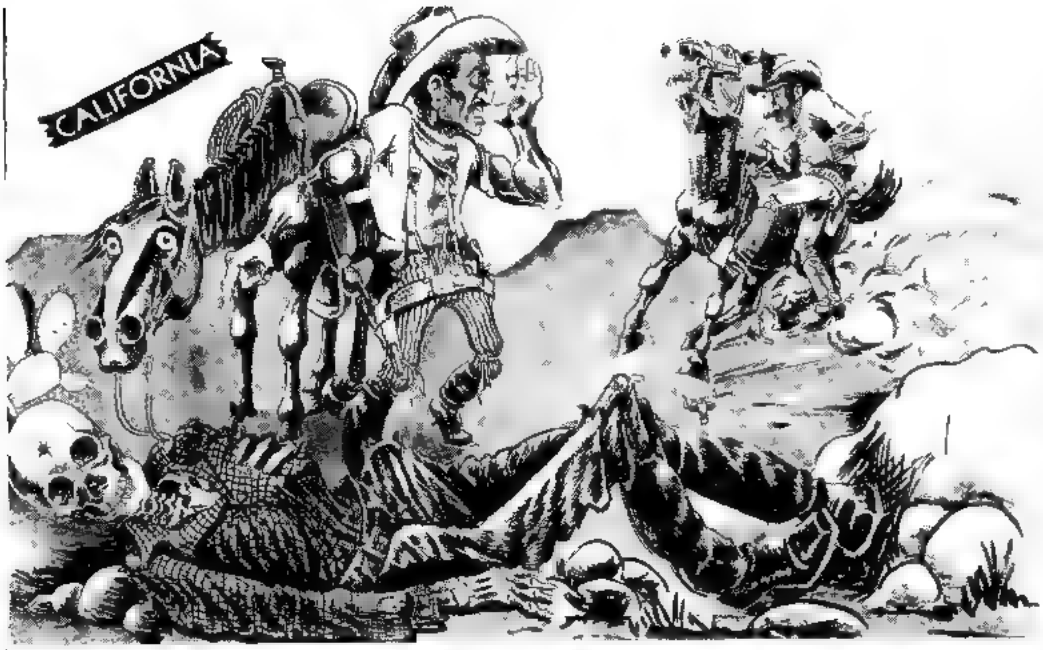
Before 1885 the Belmont district had produced more than $15,000,000 in silver and lead. With Tonopah's rise to mining prominence in 1900, the old town to the north gradually wasted away; and even as she had wrested the county seat from Ione more than a generation previously, so she was to eventually lose it in 1904 to flourishing young Tonopah.

Dominating Belmont's ghost, as it did her glory, the old brick courthouse still stands ruggedly firm; but today finds those tall, narrow windows framing a scene of loneliness and devastation. For nearly half a century the old building has stood empty and unused but for wandering prospectors and Indians who have camped in its shade and prowled through its hollow corridors.

Across the street and a block away stands the old Cosmopolitan Music Hall where young Fay Templeton and other theatrical notables of the day presented "chaste entertainments geared to the most fastidious taste."

Elsewhere over the townsite stands a multitude of stone and brick walls—the crumbling remains of assay offices and hotels, bars and brothels, barber shops, mines and mills. At the foot of a high, scenic cliff a mile from town, pinon pines and junipers cast their peaceful shade over several score headboards, a plethora of fallen palings, and a few wrought-iron fences. Here, in these sunken graves, lie the nameless stalwarts who built a boom town high in a snowy valley between the Toquimas and the Monitor ranges.

In them the ghostly old city of Belmont has her last permanent residents.



A skeleton, tentatively identified as Whitman, was found on the desert with a bullet hole through the skull.

Illus. by James T. Jones

LOST CEMENT MINE

By CHICK OLDHAM

THERE is a strange parallel, and a tragic one, between the things that happened to the followers of Cortez, when they were driven out of Mexico City by the Aztecs, and the things that happened to the three Germans who discovered what has since been called the Lost Cement Mine.

As you ought to know from the history books (which you probably haven't read), a group of Cortez's soldiers were so loaded down with gold, when they started out of Mexico City at the end of their first "visit," that they could neither fight nor run.

That was a slightly rough state of affairs what with a few hundred thousand frenzied Aztecs warting them, pulling them off the causeway into the water (where the gold sank them), and cutting at them from every angle.

They literally laid down their lives for gold.

So did the Germans.

That was 'way back near the middle of the past century. The Germans started west with a fairly large party of other emigrants. But, in central Nevada, they were attacked by Indians and only three men managed to escape with their lives. They had little else — no supplies. Still they struggled bravely on west, making their way through the desert region and on to the mountains of California.

When they reached Mono Lake and rounded its shores to the east, they felt cheered up, even though they were weary and hungry. They paused for a rest.

One of them noticed a streak of odd-looking clay. It had the firmness of cement. In fact, it was a kind of natural cement. The weary German sat down to examine the stuff more closely. Then he shouted to his companions, and all began studying the find.

It was gold!

THOSE Germans were pretty wise in the ways of gold, mostly through studying about it. The gold rush was on already. And the Germans know that the eight-inch streak of clay, which evidently extended far down into the earth, was lumpy with a yellow metal which was gold — almost pure.

They figured the clay was about two-thirds gold, worth about $200 a pound.

That's when the weary travelers let greed get the better of judgment. Each man saddled himself down with from twenty-five to thirty pounds of the golden cement — about $5000 worth. Then they moved on, walking still slower, getting exhausted quicker, resting more.

The extra load was simply too much for them. Yet they wouldn't throw it away.

One of the three lost his life as a direct result of his riches. He slipped, and, because of the gold, couldn't keep his footing. He died at the bottom of a cliff. Another died of sheer exhaustion and hunger. The third, still doggedly clinging to a small sample of his golden cement, after wisely throwing most of it away, finally was picked up by a passer-by and taken to the old Nevada mining camp of Esmeralda.

THE record is hazy as to the actions of the German after that. It is said he failed to recover from the hardship of his trip and died — which is probably right. It is said, also, that, before passing on, he drew a crude map of the location of the golden cement, giving the drawing, along with some verbal instructions, to a man named Whitman, who had befriended him.

Just what became of Whitman is another matter of guesswork, unless that skeleton, found some years later, really was his, as some people claimed. Old timers in the area said that, for years after Whitman got the map, he would disappear periodically from the village, being careful to elude anyone trying to follow him, and return with a packsack bulging with golden cement.

But on one trip he failed to return. Later a skeleton, tentatively identified as that of Whitman, was fouhd on the desert. There was a bullet hole through the skull.

Years later, in 1881, lumps of cementy clay, heavy with gold, were picked up by a wandering prospector east of the once brawling mining camp of Bodie, approximately twenty miles to the northeast of the place near Mono Lake where the Germans struck it rich — and fatal.

The find started a new gold hunt, for people were convinced the Lost Cement Mine had been spotted at last. But the rich vein was never found.

There is absolutely no doubt about the actual existence of that ore.

WESLEY Howell, who was the first mining superintendent of the famed Copper Queen mine at Bisbee, Arizona, and Spencer W. Glawson, a renowned mining engineer, actually saw that golden cement. They gave technical proof of its existence—they admitted there was a Lost Cement Mine in the area.

But that hasn't led anybody to the treasure, even though statements of the experts did cause a new crop of prospectors to start searching for the mine.

If you set out to hunt for the Lost Cement Mine, you'll be acting the part of a wise man if you'll bear in mind what Mark Twain said when he hunted for it and failed.

Twain said he was whipped down in his search for gold because his mule was ignorant of tradition. So get a mule that knows tradition, and take off.

Before the lone survivor died, he drew a crude map and gave it to a man named Whitman. It proved to be Whitman's death warrant.

A golden fortune still lies there—buried in cementy clay

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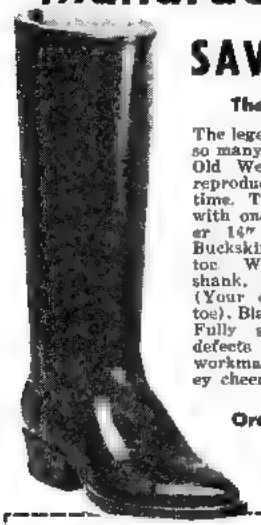

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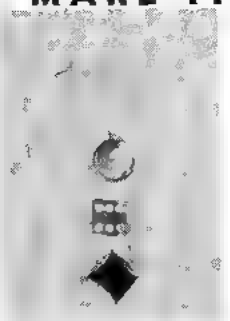

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The Door-Stop Skull

(Continued from page 19)

they quit the Highwoods and went across the mountains and the clan split up. My father bought the ranch they had built up, and the first thing we saw when us kids were snooping around the deserted place was the old, battered skull by the kitchen door. We didn't touch it, rather we avoided it. When Dad put a man on the place to run cattle, the man, Walt Cory put the skull on top of a tall pole beside the kitchen door as sort of a joke. I remember, the wrens nested in it for two summers. The little wrens would fly in and out and peek through the empty eye sockets.

My mother was outraged. She insisted my father make Walt Cory take it down. My dad spoke quietly, "We'll let him run his outfit the way he sees fit." And that settled that.

The ghosts of good Indians seemed bent on making trouble for the inhabitants of that ranch. Cory's heifers got a range disease and he lost most of his calf crop before he knew it. Then their first born baby was struck by a rattler on the front porch and died of convulsions in his mother's arms. Mary Cory lost her mind after that. She used to go out on the road in the dark of night and call the baby. It was so weird and so sad. People thought he should put her away, but after awhile she came out of it. Instead of the carefree girl she'd once been, however, she became a silent, middle-aged woman. She worked hard, but she let herself go.

Walt tried to help with kindness for awhile, then he took to chasing one of the Houley girls. Old man Houley came to a dance one night where Walt was dancing his head off, half full of whiskey, with Elsie Houley. Her Dad took two shots at Walt who dived through a window and ran for the brush. He and his wife left the mountains in a hurry. Elsie Houley had a baby. Her parents sent her and the baby east to some relatives. In later years she married a doctor and did well for herself.

MY DAD retook the Shelby ranch. He closed the houses and boarded up the windows which stared out on the road like lonely eyes. We used the ranch for additional hay land and pasture. The corrals were better than ours, so we always did our branding and dehorning up there away from home

The first act of my father was to take down the pole by the door and remove the skull which was nailed on. It was dry as driftwood and split apart, but Dad put the pieces all in a salt sack. That afternoon, he and I rode down to the Indian burying ground and dug a deep hole in the rocky earth. We put the sack and all in the hole and covered it over. It was such a nice day. The meadow larks sang while we dug in the hard ground. I found a handful of beads, and Dad said he guessed I could keep them.

The spirt of Na-tee-ka was at long last satisfied. Peace and quiet came to the sunny, valley ranch up the creek. Every branding time, the neighboring ranchers gather to get their work done. Then they sit around on their hunkers and pass around the bottle (a gracious custom of ranchers to each other after the work is done) before they go to the home ranch for a big dinner. Branding time is almost like a holiday.

But sometimes, when I am up there I feel sad, and a lump comes into my throat, when I think about the Shelbys. I remember the tall, lean, handsome men and their pretty, smiling wives.

I remember the little kids and the fun we had.

I remembered old Bill when he rode at the head of the clan and gave the orders, and I remember him as a shrunken, sad-eyed old man, bewildered by the tragic changes of the passing years.

I wonder what happened to them all.

The two, tall houses still stand in our upper pasture, side by side. There is a small crucifix nailed on the wall of an upstairs room in one house. I know it is there, because the houses are still boarded up.

A Ghost Named Jones

(Continued from page 25)

Indian by the name of Avotte, learned that a couple of Nelson teamsters were making a play for his squaw. Avotte murdered them both and topped it off by slaying four completely innocent persons. His own uncle hunted him out in the desert, killed and buried him, and brought back his deformed hand as proof.

Several years later the same district spawned Quejo, a half-breed who killed twenty men, women and children. For a half dozen years, Quejo led the lawmen of southern Nevada and northern Arizona on a wild chase through canyons flanking the Colorado. At times the officers came close enough to their quarry to find the embers of Quejo's campfires still hot. But Quejo was never apprehended.

Years later, in 1935, his mummified remains were found in a cave high above the river. He had apparently perished while pursuit was at its height.

Other misfortunes—chiefly financial—struck the district, and with eventual failure of her mines, the canyon was at last virtually abandoned.

In the bare, rocky ranges immediately south of Hoover Dam, the one-time boom camps of Nelson and Eldorado huddle silently in a desert sun that ofttimes soars to 130 degrees. Once-imposing buildings have long since fallen to tumbled ruins, once-busy streets have been largely reclaimed by creosote and cacti, and formerly-productive mines stand eerie and quiet.

It has been a long, long while since anyone has reported glimpsing the ghost named Jones. But if the phantom half-breed still prowls the vicinity, he must feel thoroughly at home.

Eldorado canyon is a perfect hide-out for ghosts . . .

"Name your poison!"

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Truly Western

Old-timers' Corral

Normnote:

For some time now we've been deluged with letters containing newspaper clippings of old-timers airing their opinions. Example: we received six clips of this identical item from six different readers. The sixth was too much for Joe to take. He sent it along to Mrs. Zoe Tilghman, widow of famed frontier Marshal Bill Tilghman and a recognized authority on old-time gunslingers and lawmen. The clip and Mrs. Tilghman's pungent comment follow:

Old Southwest Outlaw
Derides Badmen of TV

By Vernon Scott, United Press Hollywood Writer.

Hollywood (UP) The last of the Western badmen is still alive and kicking about the sorry plight of TV outlaws.

He's 94-year-old Al Jennings, train robber and terror of the Southwest during the 1880's, who now vents his spleen on weak-kneed video villains who always lost their gun battles.

"Ain't no real bad men in TV," says white-haired Jennings. "Hell's fire, they all carry two guns, twirl 'em around their fingers and hang 'em too low in the holsters. They can do everythin' but hit a target.

"I killed several men in Texas—rich ones they were, too—and I seen many a gunfight, but it was dang seldom law officers or cowboys ever got the drop on an outlaw.

"Best gunfighter I ever saw was Jim Stanton. He killed twenty men," said Al, squinting into the sun. "When I was eleven years old I seen him plug a man right between the eyes. The most beautiful gunfight I ever saw.

"I knew Jesse James personally," he added. "Got the drop on him once myself. Some of the finest men I ever knew were hoss thieves."

Al was an outlaw for three years in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas, and admits to robbing trains and banks. He skips many details because "the statute of limitations ain't run out on some of the things I done."

In 1895 he was given a life term in a federal penitentiary, but was pardoned by Presidential order after serving five years.

Since his rip-snorting desperado days, Al has been lawyer, actor, politician, writer and evangelist.

Reply By Mrs. Tilghman

Dear Joe Small:

The Al Jennings clipping is more of the same old stuff. That Hollywood correspondent seems to fall back on old Al every time he's hard up for copy. Does he get paid by the column inch? Those UP big-shots, now gone, George B. Parker, Parker LaMoore and Lee Hills, would not have passed such stuff.

I can only repeat what has been said and written many times and borne out by records: Al Jennings' bandit career lasted only four months; the gang of which he was a member got less than $500 cash on their best haul; and failures were more numerous with this outfit than successful jobs.

As to his claim that Statutes of Limitations are still running on some of his jobs, preventing him discussing them: Murders are about the only crimes on which there is no limitation—and, of course, Al was of too lofty and noble character to kill anybody except in fair fight! In any event, after all these years witnesses could no longer be found to try him. So this is a flimsy excuse for not giving "details."

One thing I want to emphasize: the general misunderstanding of which he takes advantage in the matter of a Presidential pardon.

The one Jennings got was not a pardon for the crime for which he had been sentenced, or to reduce that sentence; it was a "citizenship pardon." Conviction on a felony deprives a person of his rights as a citizen, such as voting and holding office. These rights can only be restored by executive writ, which is called a restoration of citizenship or a citizenship pardon. Usually such a writ is granted only after the ex-convict has led an upright life for some time; though, in some states, the Governor often grants it when a convict with a good prison record is released. Federal prisoners can be pardoned only by the President.

I have seen and carefully read the pardon of Al Jennings when he had it on exhibition at a picture show of his "life." It was issued about five years after his release from prison on completion of his sentence. Court action, faithfully carried out by his brother John, had obtained the commutation of his life sentence to five years after he had served two or three years. He was transferred to Leavenworth, where he finished out that term.

The pardon made a good display, as the paper bore the word PARDON in large letters at the top; was signed by the President, and few persons would take the trouble to read it fully.

Writers, as well as the general public, usually fail to make this distinction between a full pardon and a restoration of citizenship. So it makes a nice talking point for Al. He is not telling a lie, but he is certainly trading on the misunderstanding of his audience.

The above clipping is a prime example of why there is so much distortion and confusion in the field of Western history. *True West* is doing its level best to clear up this cloudy picture and I am glad to do my bit to help in this worthy cause. I get many letters from TW readers asking about various matters, and answer them to the best of my ability. If it is something out of my range, I say so.

Now, I have an idea. Rather than swallow these fanciful tales whole, why not have a *True West* Fact Finders Club? T.W.F.F. for short. F.F. stands for Fine Fellows AND for Fake Fighters. Let readers send queries to TW. (I think Our Joe would give a bit of space for such a worthwhile department.) TW could print the queries, and some replies of general interest. Questions of personal interest could be answered by direct letter; the inquirer to send along a stamped, self-addressed envelope with his query.

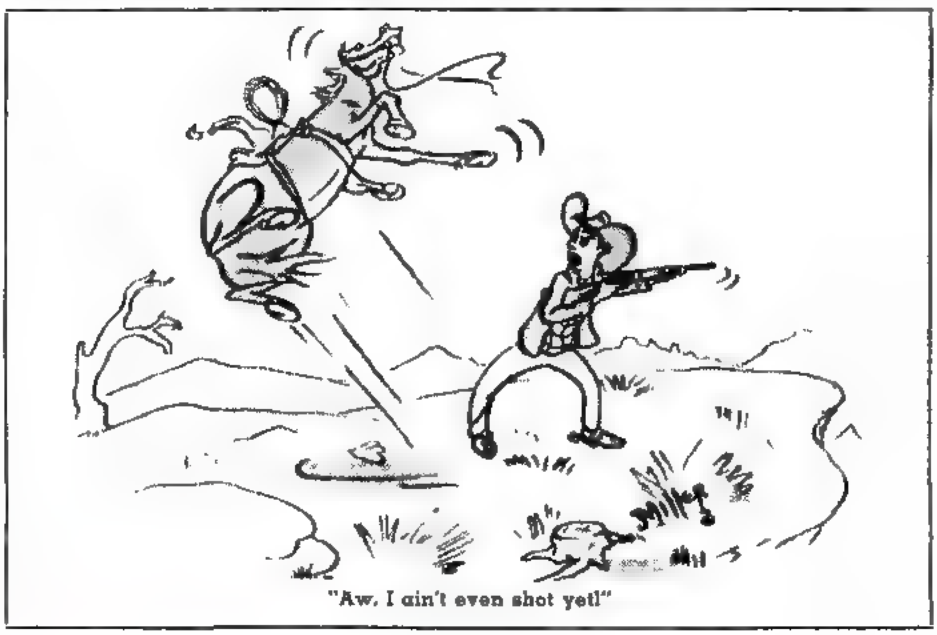
I have some queries that I'd like to have answered myself. To start off, I wish somebody at Las Animas would dig out the facts on Jim Stanton. I rather think there was such a man and that he was foreman of a ranch, as Al says. But how about his feats as a killer? Twenty men is a lot of killing!

It would be interesting also to find out where and when the paths of Al Jennings and Jesse James crossed.

Another colorful character, recently deceased, could stand a little investigation Frank (Pistol Pete) Eaton. Somebody at Albuquerque could check out one of Pete's wild yarns. He claimed that in the fall of 1881 he went to Albuquerque to kill Wiley Campsey for revenge. He found Campsey, so he said, with two bodyguards, killed Campsey and one guard; the other fled. Pete was wounded in this affray. Such a fracas would surely get notice in the local papers and a little research would prove or disprove this story. Eaton's Oklahoma yarns have been pretty well discredited.

Facts may be found in court records and newspapers; sometimes in the personal papers of old-timers' families, although these should be checked with care. Many State Historical Societies have card indexes of newspapers, giving

(Continued on page 46)



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ROSS CARMICHAEL
Encino, California

Longrope's Last Guard

(Continued from page 16)

when he moves 'round. An' the cricket in his hit—he's usin' one of them hollow conchoed half-breeds—she comes plain to me in the stillness. Once there's a steer layin' on the edge of the herd starts sniffin'. He's takin' long draws of the air, he's nosin' for something. I don't like this, it's a bad sign; it shows he's layin' for trouble, an' all he needs is some little excuse.

"Now every steer, when he beds down, holds his breath for a few seconds, then blows off; that noise is all right an' shows he's settlin' himself for comfort But when he curls his nose an' makes them long draws it's a sign he's sniffin' for something, an' if anything crosses his wind that he don't like there's liable to be trouble. I've seen dry trail herds mighty thirsty, layin' good till a breeze springs off the water, maybe ten miles away; they start sniffin', an' the minute they get the wind you could comb Texas an' wouldn't have enough punchers to turn 'em till they wet their feet an' fill their paunches.

"I get tired sittin' there starin' at nothin', so start ridin' 'round. Now it's sure dark when animals can't see, but I tell you by the way my hoss moves he's feelin' his way. I don't blame him none; it's like lookin' in a black pot. Sky an' ground all the same, an' I ain't gone twenty-five yards till I hear cattle gettin' up around me; I'm in the herd an' it's luck I'm singin' an' they don't get scared. Pullin' to the left I work cautious an' easy till I'm clear of the bunch. Ridin' useless, so I flop my weight over on one stirrup an' go on singin'.

"The lightnin's quit now, an' she's darker than ever; the breeze has died down an' it's hotter than the hubs of hell. Above my voice I can hear Longrope. He's singin' the 'Texas Ranger' now; the Ranger's a long song an' there's few punchers that knows it all, but Longrope's sprung a lot of new verses on me an' I'm interested. Seems like he's on about the twenty-fifth verse, an' there's danger of his chokin' down, when there's a whisperin' in the grass behind me; it's a breeze sneakin' up. It flaps the tail of my slicker an' goes by; in another second she hits the herd. The ground shakes, an' they're all runnin'. My hoss takes the scare with 'em an's bustin' a hole in the darkness when he throws both front feet in a badger hole, goin' to his knees an' plowin' his nose in the dirt. But he's a good night hoss an's hard to keep down. The minute he gets his feet under him he raises, runnin' like a scared wolf. Hearin' the roar behind him he don't care to mix with them locoed longhorns.

I GOT my head turned over my shoulder listenin', tryin' to make out which way they're goin', when there's a flash of lightnin' busts a hole in the sky—it's one of these kind that puts the fear of God in a man, thunder an' all together. My hoss whirls an' stops in his tracks, spraddlin' out an' squattin' like he's hit, an' I can feel his heart beatin' agin my leg, while mine's pounding' my ribs like it'll bust through. We're both plenty scared.

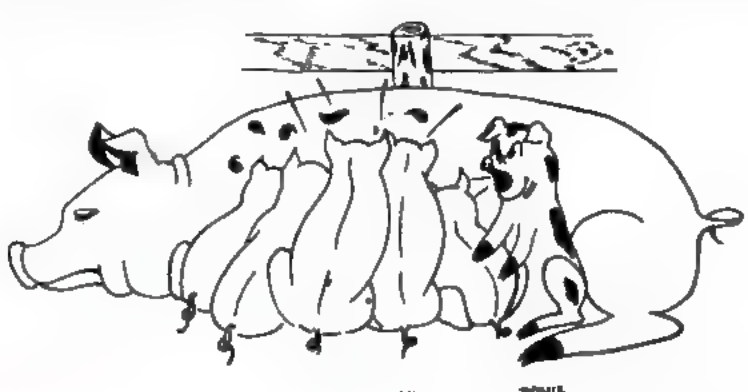
"This flash lights up the whole country, givin' me a glimpse of the herd runnin' a little to my left. Big drops of rain are pounding on my hat. The storm has broke now for sure, with the lightnin' bombardin' us at every jump. Once a flash shows me Longrope, ghostly in his wet slicker. He's so close to me that I could hit him with my quirt an' I hollers to him, 'This is hell.'

"'Yes,' he yells back above the roar; 'I wonder what damned fool kicked the lid off.'

"I can tell by the noise that they're runnin' straight; there ain't no clickin' of horns. It's a kind of hummin' noise like a buzz-saw, only a thousand times louder. There's no use in tryin' to turn 'em in this darkness, so I'm ridin' wide—just herdin' by ear an' follerin' the noise.

"Pretty soon my ears tell me they're crowdin' an' comin' together; the next flash shows 'em all millin', with heads jammed together an' horns locked; some's rared up ridin' others, an' these is squirmin' like bristled snakes. In the same light I see Longrope, an' from the blink I get of him he's among 'em or too close for safety, an' in the dark I thought I saw a gun flash three times with no report But with the noise these longhorns are makin' now, I doubt if I could a-heard a six-gun bark if I pulled the trigger myself, an' the next thing I know me an' my hoss goes over a bank, lightin' safe. I guess it ain't over four feet, but it seems like fifty in the darkness, an' if it hadn't been for my chin-string I'd a-went from under my hat. Again the light shows me we're in a 'royo with the cattle comin' over the edge, wigglin' an' squirmin' like army worms.

"It's a case of all night riding. Sometimes they'll mill an' quiet down, then start trottin' an' break into a run. Not till daybreak do they stop, an' maybe you think old day ain't welcome. My hoss is sure leg-weary, an' I ain't so rollicky myself. When she gets light enough I begin lookin' for Longrope, with nary a sign of him; an' the herd, you wouldn't know they were the same cattle—smeared with mud an' ga'nt as greyhounds; some of 'em with their tongues still lollin' out from their night's run. But sizin' up the bunch, I guess I got 'em all. I'm kind of worried about Longrope. It's a cinch



"Pigs!"

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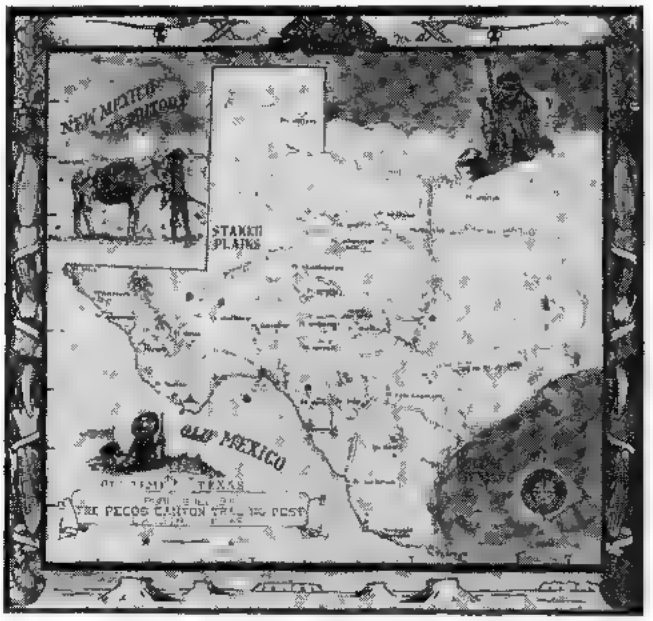

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that wherever he is he's afoot, an' chances is he's layin' on the prairie with a broken leg.

THE cattle's spread out, an' they begin feedin'. There ain't much chance of losin' 'em, now it's broad daylight, so I ride up on a raise to take a look at the back trail. While I'm up there viewin' the country, my eyes run onto somethin' a mile back in a draw. I can't make it out, but get curious, so spurrin' my tired hoss into a lope I take the back trail. 'Tain't no trouble to foller in the mud; it's plain as plowed ground. I ain't rode three hundred yard till the country raises a little an' shows me this thing's a hoss, an' by the white streak on his flank I heap savvy it's Peon—that's the hoss Longrope's ridin'. When I get close he whinners pitiful like; he's lookin' for sympathy, an' I notice, when he turns to face me, his right foreleg's broke. He's sure a sorry sight with that fancy, full-stamped center-fire saddle hangin' under his belly in the mud. While I'm lookin' him over, my hoss cocks his ears to the right, snortin' low. This scares me—I'm afeared to look. Somethin' tells me I won't see Longrope, only part of him—that part that stays here on earth when the man's gone. Bracin' up, I foller my hoss's ears, an' there in the holler of the 'royo is a patch of yeller; it's part of a slicker. I spur up to get a better look over the bank, an' there tromped in the mud is all there is left of Longrope. Pullin' my gun I empty her in the air. This brings the boys that are follerin' on the trail from the bed-ground. Nobody'd had to tell 'em we'd had hell, so they come in full force, every man but the cook an' hoss-wrangler

"Nobody feels like talkin'. It don't matter how rough men are—I've known em that never spoke without cussin', that claimed to fear neither God, man, nor devil—but let death visit camp an' it puts 'em thinkin'. They generally take their hats off to this old boy that comes everywhere an' any time. He's always ready to pilot you—willin' or not—over the long dark trail that folks don't care to travel. He's never welcome, but you've got to respect him.

"'It's tough damned tough,' says Spanish, raisin' poor Longrope's head an' wipin' the mud from his face with his neckhandkerchief, tender, like he's feared he'll hurt him. We find his hat tromped in the mud not fur from where he's layin'. His scabbard's empty, an' we never do locate his gun.

"That afternoon when we're countin' out the herd to see if we're short any, we find a steer with a broken shoulder an' another with a hole plumb through his nose. Both these is gun wounds; this accounts for them flashes I see in the night. It looks like, when Longrope gets mixed in the mill, he tries to gun his way out, but the cattle crowd him to the bank an' he goes over. The chances are he was dragged from his hoss in a tangle of horns.

"Some's for takin' him to Dodge an' gettin' a box made for him, but Old Spanish says: 'Boys, Longrope is a prairie man, an' if she was a little rough at times, she's been a good foster mother. She cared for him while he's awake, let her nurse him in his sleep.' So we wrapped him in his blankets, an' put him to bed.

"It's been twenty years or more since we tucked him in with the end-gate of the bed-wagon for a headstone, which the cattle have long since rubbed down, leavin' the spot unmarked. It sounds lonesome, but he ain't alone, 'cause these old

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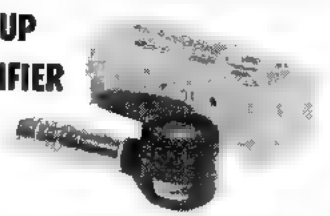

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prairies has cradled many of his kind in their long sleep."

From: TRAILS PLOWED UNDER, by Charles M. Russell. Copyright 1927, Doubleday, Page and Company.

Choctaw Execution

(Continued from page 17)

tion," my new friend Elliott said. I started to go get my camera but hesitated when some Indians came out of the brush southwest of the courthouse. They were carrying a coffin. I watched them set it down near the courthouse. Then two of the Indian policemen went off toward the creek.

These Choctaws didn't wrap themselves in blankets, the way some of the tribes further west did. They liked loud colors and big hats, but they dressed about like the white people.

The two policemen came back from the creek. Between them was the condemned man. All that time Silan Lewis had been there by the creek with his family. Any time he had wanted to, he could have ridden away.

I looked closely at the Indian when they brought him to the courthouse. This was the first time I'd seen him since that day in Hartshorne when I'd made the photograph. He looked about the same—perhaps a trifle thinner, but his features showed no sign of worry or fear.

LEWIS was led to a spot about thirty feet from the courthouse on the north side. The empty coffin waited only a few feet away. He wore a blue serge suit. He pulled off the coat and vest, exposing a white shirt.

A blanket was thrown on the ground, and Lewis was forced to sit on it, facing the courthouse. Someone removed his shoes. His feet were stretched out straight in front of his body. He sat very erect.

A Choctaw official came up behind Lewis and unbuttoned his shirt, baring his chest. The official carried a small tin box, filled with some sort of white powder—the stuff looked like flour. He reached over Lewis's shoulder and made a round white spot on the skin.

The custom was to place the spot on the left side, over the heart. Perhaps the official was excited, or maybe he did it on purpose—I never learned for sure—but he made the powder spot on the right side of the condemned man's chest.

Two other Indians stepped forward and grabbed Lewis's hands, holding his arms out from his sides.

I slipped away to the hilltop and retrieved my camera. No one seemed to pay any attention to me. I sidled up to a spot on the east side of the courthouse and set up my tripod. Here I was partially hidden by a pile of firewood.

A man carrying a rifle walked toward Lewis. I thought he was the Indian sheriff, but he wasn't. Later I learned that the sheriff, who was supposed to fire the fatal bullet according to tribal tradition, refused to do it because he was a personal friend of Lewis'. The chief deputy followed suit, so another deputy had to do the job.

THE executioner stopped about twenty feet from Lewis, took deliberate aim, and fired. White powder rose from the brown chest, and the bullet struck the ground behind Lewis. He fell back, the Indians on each side still holding his arms.

A white man ran forward and grabbed Lewis' feet. Still the Indian didn't die—I saw him moving. Finally, after they had waited about fifteen minutes, one of the Indians took out a handkerchief and clamped it over Lewis's mouth and nose, smothering him.

I had been so absorbed in watching that I had forgotten about taking a picture. I took one after it was all over, showing Lewis prone on the blanket and the group around him. Then I gathered up my equipment and left.

As I rode into the trees, on my way back to Red Oak, I heard a mournful sound from the direction of the creek where Lewis and his wife had been camping. It was the high-pitched wailing of a woman.

That execution was something of a historic event. Statehood came to Oklahoma a few years later, and the white man's law took over. Other men were executed, many of them. But Silan Lewis was the last man to be executed by the Choctaws under their tribal laws.

Gauntlet Gloves

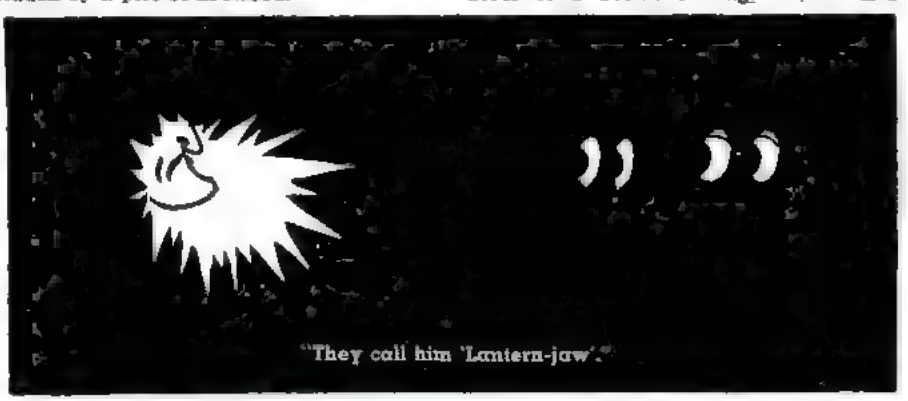
(Continued from page 13)

scared screams were like a knife cutting me apart. I ran after them blindly, yelling. I felt utterly helpless.

I guess I went a little crazy. I kept shouting at the horse that he'd get a damned good shooting when I caught up with him—as if that would make him stop. But my trigger finger got mighty limp when finally the runaway horse slowed. I felt Roy over and knew there was no life. Roy was done for.

I don't know why I didn't shoot the horse. A man never knows why he did this or didn't do that at such times. I just loosened the rope, took off the gloves, stuck them in my pocket and took Roy in.

When a cowboy wants to rid the world of a horse he thinks is mean enough to die by running himself to death, he resorts to a beefhide drag. There is no



"They call him 'Lantern-jaw'."

greater punishment for an outlaw horse. The animal just doesn't stop running. He'll go right on off the end of the earth; he won't let up until he's done for, one way or the other.

After seeing what I saw, I got mean enough, mad enough, or off balance enough to give that killer the cure. I blindfolded the horse, pulled a dried-up beef hide off the corral fence, tied the tail of it to that nag's tail, took off the blinds and whacked him across the rump with those gauntlet gloves. He hit the gate going fast, and burst out into the wide, wide world.

It must be a terrifying thing for a booger-shy horse. The hide sailed high, banged down on the ground, popped and crackled. It caught on the sagebrush and snapped loose to go up over the flying outlaw's back, then banged the ground again behind him.

GENERALLY, days, weeks or months later, two dried-out hides are found, still tied together, a skeleton lying nearby —only this time the horse's hide is dried and curled, too . . .

That was the fate I mapped out for Gauntlet—the name he went by after he'd killed Roy. But it didn't work out that way. He had his run without going over a cliff, running a gopher hole up his leg, or doing any one of a dozen other things that generally happens to a boogered nag with the devil on his tail.

I found the horse, head drooped, foam-covered, dirt-caked, foot-sore, and completely done in—nine miles and four hours from where he started. He hadn't gotten there by running a straight line either. Maybe he hadn't run all that time, but he'd wasted very little of it resting—from the looks of him.

I got off my horse, walked up to him and hit the spent animal in the face with my hat. He backed up against the hide, kicked it twice, then stood there trembling. There was no sign of the wicked look left in his eyes. I threw up my hands, whacked my hat on my chaps. He didn't scare. He just stood and looked at me. He was a cured outlaw.

I said, "You bastard! Why couldn't you have looked that way at Roy?"

But he hadn't and now it couldn't be helped. Many a cowboy has been killed or maimed because he didn't understand his horse, and his horse didn't understand him. One of the most common faults used to be that a young cowboy would almost always underrate a horse's ability and willingness to kill him under certain circumstances. Some of that old stock was just half broken in. Many of those horses were just plain mean. A cowpuncher just had to allow for this, be on constant guard, and not take chances. It was the young boys who got hurt and killed mostly.

I put my rope over Gauntlet's head, put the blindfold back on, and unwired the worn beef hide from his tail. I led him back to the corral.

I have never rawhided another horse. The one I did rawhide lived long enough to be called *old* Gauntlet without harming another rider.

That was forty years ago. I'll never forget the thoughts that went through my mind during the lonesome ride back to the corral on that miserable day when a pair of gauntlet gloves and a boogered nag dragged my best friend to a horrible death.

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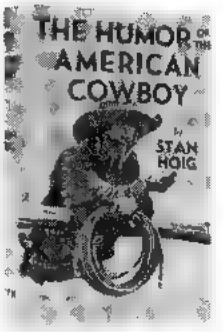

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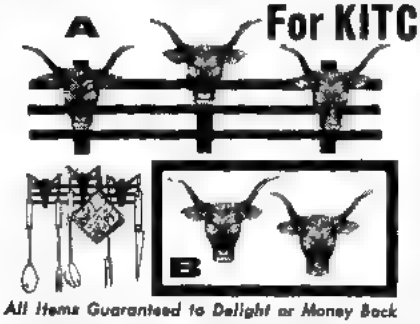

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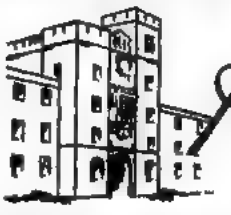

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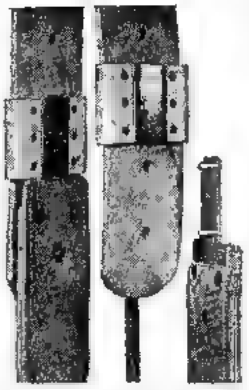

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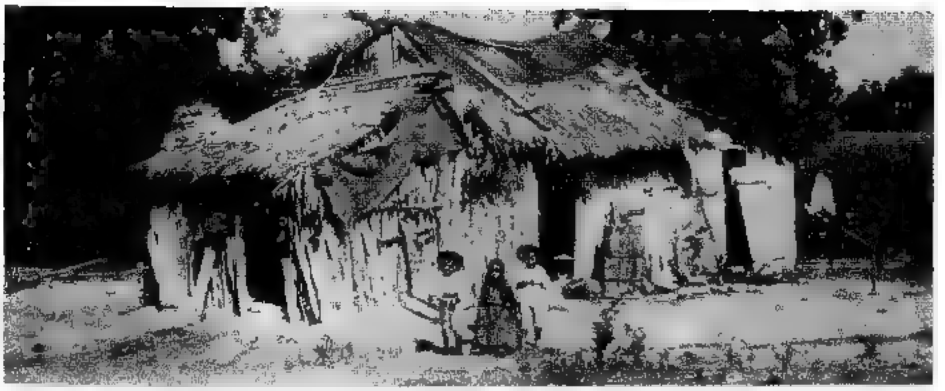

A Mexican *JACAL* of the type mentioned in this story—home to the poorer element in Mexico as well as some of the border states.

Not The Will of God

(Continued from page 11)

his hand they fixed a sharp, strong dagger. Should anyone step on the trap, the bronze man would lunge through the false wall and tilt forward so as to stab the intruder to the heart.

"The entrance to the big cavern was naturally well hidden by some boulders. The Indians hid it even better. They had an understanding that the treasure should never be taken from the cave except in the presence of all members of the tribe.

" 'And now,' the old Indian said as he finished telling us all this, 'I am the last of the tribe. The others are all dead; most of them were killed. I can unlock the door. I have the right to dispose of the wealth. You have been generous to me, but it is plain that you live very hard. Why?'

"Then my husband Ignacio answered, 'Because God wills it.'

" 'No', replied the Indian, 'God no longer wills thus. Come with me and I will give you and your wife enough to let you live in plenty all the rest of your life.'

"The next morning very early my husband Ignacio left. The Indian waited here near the *jacal* all day. Ignacio did not return until long after dark. The Indian had left while the sun was setting. He was gone one year exactly. He came again on Christmas day. Again we gave him warmth and such food as we had. He was grateful. Again he asked why we continued to live so hard, and once more Ignacio replied that it was the will of God.

"The Indian then repeated his whole story. I know it was true, for he told it exactly as he told it the first time. 'Come with me in the morning,' he said to Ignacio, 'and I will take you to where there is a great plenty.'

"Early next morning, before daylight, Ignacio went away. I gave the Indian some breakfast. He asked me where my husband had gone. I did not know. He asked me when he would return. I did not know. He waited many hours, waited for Ignacio to return so that he might lead him to the cave of riches. He said it was not more than a day on foot, on into the mountains. At sunset, when he saw that Ignacio would not return so long as he remained, the Indian went away. He has never been back.

"No, it is not the will of God that we live thus on parched corn. It is the will of Ignacio."

AFTER Tomás heard this account he slept and then rode on to inspect the ties cut by other men. When he got back to the village, he told his employer, Don Joaquin Villareal, what he had heard.

Don Joaquin, who had recovered from his illness, at once determined to search for the cave. He went to Chihuahua City and secured a permit to prospect for mines. He took Tomás with him and an extra mule with provisions. They went to Ignacio's *jacal*, and then they traveled west, deeper into the mountains. After they had been looking a long, long time, they spied a hole in the top of a mountain. They threw rocks down the hole. They had to wait many seconds before they heard the rocks hit and echo below. The echoing sounds told them there was a cavern beneath.

Don Joaquin thought it best to enter the cavern through a tunnel from one side. A deep ravine cutting down one side of the mountain afforded a practicable place at which to start the tunnel. From a *rancheria* not far off and from other places Don Joaquin hired about twenty men, established a good camp, and set about his great work.

There was nothing but rock, rock, rock. The laborers cut their way into it by inches, carrying the chipped pieces out in *zurrones*—rawhide bags slung from the head of the carriers. They worked until Don Ignacio's funds for hiring men were exhausted. Then the only way he could keep on after the treasure was to promise each laborer a share of what he knew would eventually be found. At the end of six months they struck a kind of reddish sandstone that appeared to have been wet with blood. Quickly they tunnelled through it and were in an enormous cavern.

The cavern was empty. Yet some animal bones and many marks of fire showed that human beings had once been there and had eaten. Far, far overhead could be seen a speck of light, through the discovery hole. But the cavern was dark, the light that came through the long tunnel being almost as dim as that from the hole overhead. All exploring had to be done with candles. The emptiness and the darkness discouraged the workmen, and now all but four of them quit. One of the four who remained was Tomás. Don Joaquin was not discouraged.

For days he went about the walls of the cavern, striking into them with a pick, Tomás holding the light. Tallow was costly, and they had to use sotol stalks for torches. Finally, Don Joaquin struck a piece of wall that sounded hollow. Then with a few strokes he broke through.

In the dim light made by the torch of sotol stalk, which could hardly penetrate the dust, Tomás and Don Joaquin saw in front of them a figure of bronze larger than a real man. In its right hand was a dagger, securely bound there by rawhide thongs. Perhaps the trap-door

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had not been correctly built; perhaps many years of standing had caused it to grow stiff. Anyway, God was good and the dagger did not lunge forward to stab the intruders.

Tomás and his master were in the treasure room. The old Indian had told the truth. There were piles of silver bars, of gold, jewels, guns, silver-mounted saddles, finely wrought bridles, finely engraved swords.

THE discovery was made close to dark on a Saturday. Don Joaquin said: "We are tired almost to death. Work and hunger have made us weak. Wealth so sudden has made us weaker. Let us rest tomorrow, the day of God, and give thanks to Him. On Monday morning we five shall divide all things. Any man who wishes may go to the village, but not a word must be said of this discovery. I and one other of you will sleep in the entrance to the tunnel so that no stranger shall enter."

Only two of the laborers went to the village. They drank much tequila and they talked. A large guard of soldiers on their way to fight the Yaqui Indians were camped in this village. Some of the officers heard the talk of the miners.

About daylight on Monday morning, Don Joaquin's camp was surprised and he and all his men were made prisoners. Also, other men who had helped with the work but who had deserted were brought in as prisoners. Then, chained together, the captives were marched southward. They left the wild mountains and came into a country that had cart roads. They were fed almost nothing. They were jabbed and beaten when they lagged. Some of them died.

Finally, after having been driven for weeks over hundreds of miles, the remnant of prisoners were cast into a dark prison of thick rock walls. Tomás had a cell into which no light at all entered. Tortillas and water were brought to him by a guard carrying a lantern. The guard left immediately and he ate in darkness. He stayed there until he lost all account of time and the seasons.

Then, without explanation, he was liberated. He did not know why he had been made prisoner; he did not know why he had been freed. He made his way north to the village in the Sierra Madre. There he learned how Don Joaquin had been stood against a 'dobe wall and shot. The village was all but deserted. An old man said that tie-cutters no longer worked in the forests. Tomás came on north and crossed the Rio Grande.

"Señores," he concluded his tale; "I have told you the truth. These eyes have seen all that I have described. These hands held the pick that dug and they held the sotol stalk that lighted up the man of bronze with a dagger in his hand and then the treasure. These feet walked with chains.

"That the army officers got the treasure I am sure. They may have left something I do not know. At least the cavern with the tunnel into it is still there."

Flowers for Charley McDaniels

(Continued from page 31)

being allowed to drink in the main saloons in those days. He walked quietly into the narrow hall that led to the main barroom.

He nudged open a door and took a close look at the customers ringing the

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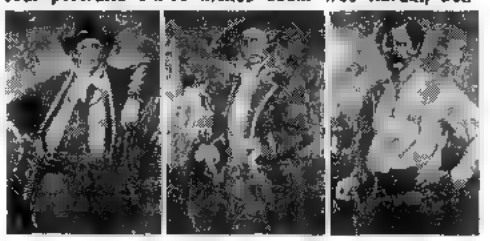

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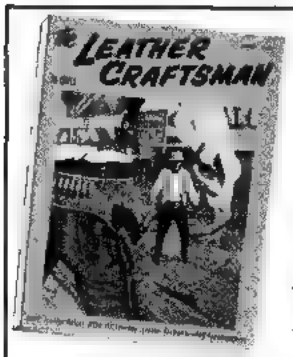

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gaming tables. His man wasn't there either.

He entered the room then and spoke quietly for a moment to Jake Sullivan, the bar-keep, then left by the main front door, walking out as unobtrusively as he could.

He hadn't fooled anybody, however. Behind him, every customer in Jake's place pushed through the swinging doors and stood in the street, watching him. Some followed for a ways, then finally lost interest, as Dad turned a corner and went around to Utah Street.

Again he searched the red-light district, combing it as carefully as a squaw hunting lice in a buck's hair, and again he had no luck. Then, just as he was coming out of a big red-brick building as known as Tillie Howard's place, his deputy, Elmer Wagner, came across the street to meet him.

"Been a shooting at the Wigwam Saloon on San Antonio," Elmer reported.

Dad asked quickly: "Who was in it?"

"A gambler and a deputy city marshal," Elmer said.

"Anybody else?"

"Yeah. The feller what done the shootin'. Didn't get his name. The deputy was Tom Glover. The gambler was that big, black Mex monte dealer at the Wigwam."

TOGETHER, they hurried toward the Wigwam. Turning west on San Antonio, they saw a crowd making a rush for the far side of the street, taking cover wherever it was to be found. Across the street, on the south side, stood a lone man. The man stood hesitant, as if not quite sure where to go next.

"That's our man!" Dad exclaimed to Elmer, then added: "Get to the other side of the street and keep out of this fracas till I'm down, or till I invite you to take a hand."

Charley McDaniels caught sight of Elmer crossing the street and burst into sudden loud laughter. Then he stepped out into the middle of the street, turned his back on Elmer and faced toward Dad, who also had stepped out into the clear.

"Marshal," he called to Dad, "I'm coming after my horse. I'm fixing to leave town."

Dad called back to him. "It's too late for that now, Charley. I'm arresting you for murder; and where you're going, you won't need a horse."

"That gambler was cheatin', Marshal," McDaniels argued. "And I warned that law feller to stay out of the deal, but he went ahead and drawed on me. First!"

"Can you prove that, Charley?"

"I sure can."

"All right then," Dad said. "You got nothing to fear. Just drop your guns, and we'll go talk to the judge. I'll see that you get a fair trial."

Dad didn't any, more expect Charley McDaniels to drop his guns than did the hiding onlookers who peeked from every doorway and window along both sides of the street. But he stood waiting, giving McDaniels a chance. And while he waited, he could hear the old-timers calling bets to each other up and down and across the street. He took what comfort he could from the fact that the odds offered seem to make him a favorite to win.

Dad called again. "Drop those irons and lift your hands, Charley. Like I said, I'll see that you get a fair trial."

But the killer grinned and shook his head. "Sorry, Marshal," he said. "I can't hear you. Not when you talk like that."

"You better hear me," Dad said. "If you don't, I'm going to have to come and get you, Charley, and you're not going to like that."

McDANIELS, as if stalling for time, studied on that for a moment, then tried to make a deal. "Tell you what, Marshal. Let's save us both a lot of trouble. You let me get to my horse, and I'll leave town—and promise not to come back as long as you're the King-pin of the butcher shop here!"

Dad shook his head. "You've got me wrong, Charley. I don't make deals with outlaws. You're not getting out of this town till you've settled your bill."

"Well, then," McDaniels said reluctantly. "I reckon you better start walking. I'll *be coming to meet you.*"

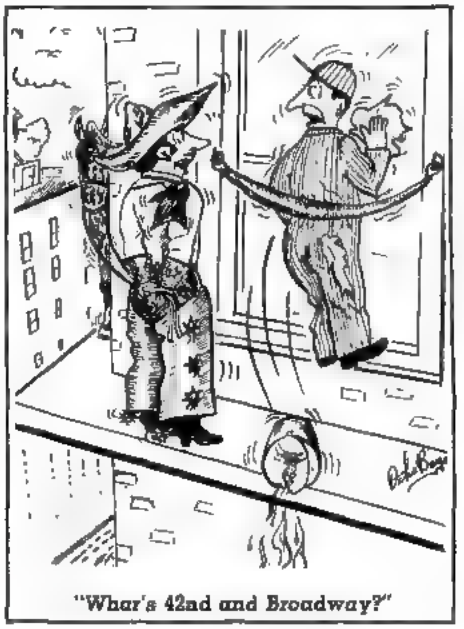
There was a span of ninety-six feet between them when they started. I know this because Old Chipmunk, a deputy city marshal, stepped it off the next morning—"just to keep the books straight." There wasn't a soul in sight between them; but from a hundred different points of cover, there were eyes squinted against the hot glare of the afternoon sun. There was no sound, either, except their slow, deliberate footsteps, muffled by the powdery dust of the street.

Moving slowly, speaking no word, they closed the gap to sixty feet, to forty, then to thirty.

From that point on, the only thing either man watched was his opponent's eyes. Each knew that the other walked with his hands held level with the gun-butts at his belt, but it wasn't hands they watched. It was the eyes that would give the tell-tale signal.

A listless breeze trailed along the street, picking up a tiny wisp of dust, then dropping it almost before it cleared the ground. The leaves on a big cottonwood overhanging the street trembled slightly and grew still.

Then it came, and was over with such shocking suddenness that it was almost a disappointment to the onlookers. There was just that one brief instant when the hands of both men were filled, and the guns were bucking and crashing. Then



"Whar's 42nd and Broadway?"

the guns were still again and, through a haze of light, bluish smoke that hung in the dead air, the onlookers saw one of the men lower his guns, as if he no longer had the strength to hold them. Then, as one gun slipped from his hand, he pitched forward, plowing into the dust with his head and shoulder.

He lay there, still and quiet, while the second man, bare-headed now, advanced cautiously toward him, still holding a smoking gun in each hand.

ELMER Wagner and Chipmunk were the first to rush out.

"You hurt, Marshal?" Elmer queried, excitedly. "You hit anywhere?"

Dad looked behind him, to where his black hat lay in the dust. "No," he said. "But I think he ruined a damned good hat for me!"

Chipmunk brought Dad his hat, and Dad poked a finger through one of the jagged holes in the crown and seemed to study his finger for a good long while. Finally, clapping the hat on his head, he said to Elmer: "You and Chipmunk take care of things. I've got business at home that can't wait."

I was there at the house, when he came through the yard gate. His steps seemed faster and wider apart than ever and there was a wider-than-usual grin on his face. And I remember how Mother was sitting there in the old granny rocking chair, watching him come up the steps, like she was seeing a dream come true.

Dad caught her up out of the chair and kissed her and said, "Hi, Reb; is supper ready?" and winked at me to show that he knew it was 'way too early for supper yet. Then he headed for the water cooler, where he got himself a big long drink of water.

When he finished, Mother asked quietly: "When will the funeral be, Rocky?"

"At ten o'clock in the morning."

Mother nodded. "I'll hunt up my hymnbook," she said, "and cut some fresh flowers at daybreak."

Dad said: "Make them something special, Reb. He was a game one; I liked him."

"Then why did you kill him?" she asked. Her tone wasn't accusing; she just wanted to know.

"Why, for a couple of reasons, Reb. First, he was too old a dog to teach new tricks. Second, you're too young and pretty yet to be left a widow."

Dad grinned at her, pitched his hat onto the couch, hunted up another, and left the house, headed back for town. Mother picked up the hat, stuck a finger through one of the holes in the crown, then finally went to hang the hat in a closet.

"Now," she said to me, "if he can just get a shirt and a pair of pants, we'll have a whole outfit."

She was smiling at me as she said that; but when I happened to wander into the next room a few minutes later, I found her stretched out, face-down across the bed, weeping silently, like Dad always said a woman had to do now and then.

The next morning, I helped carry the flowers that Mother and Dad took to put on Charley McDaniels' grave, after they'd buried and sung over him. But the sorrel horse wasn't anywhere in sight.

I never did learn what happened to him.

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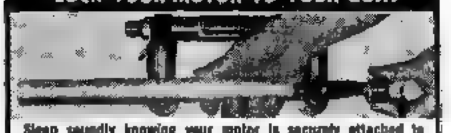

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Hot-Iron Killer

(Continued from page 12)

Sin-Killer the "Hot-Iron Killer" after that.

As usual, it wasn't his fault. He didn't invite it.

Sin-Killer had done nothing more than preach a funeral oration at the grave of a man named Jim Meldrum, who had been killed in a feud with the Ensley family.

Sin-Killer delivered a moving funeral oration. Those who heard him were stirred by his compassion for his fellow man and the manner in which the huge giant could express it. But there were certain citizens who didn't think so much of what Sin-Killer said at the grave, especially about the men who killed Jim Meldrum.

Among those were Tobe Ensley and his brothers

Tobe and three of his brothers, all tough fighting men, waited on Sin-Killer. They confronted him with drawn guns as he was riding toward his home.

"We thought you cottoned to those ornery Meldrums," Tobe said. "Now we know it. We'll see that you don't make no more funeral speeches saying what a fine fellow Jim Meldrum was. Hank, Obie, get his hardware."

They got Sin-Killer's hardware.

"Now you," Tobe said to the preacher, "get going—and God have mercy on your soul, as you say it." Tobe laughed.

The four Ensley brothers set off, with Sin-Killer in the middle. They rode to their camp where the preacher could see the red glow of a branding fire. The branding irons, untended, were in the fire—white hot.

There was a tree beside the fire

When the little group rode up to the tree, Tobe lifted a hand, reaching for a rope hanging from a branch of the tree. He knotted the rope. Then, while his three brothers held their guns on the preacher, Tobe raised the rope over Sin-Killer's head.

The man of God knew what was in store for him. Yet he sat silent, motionless.

Also he knew that men grouped so close together would be reluctant to start shooting lest they hit friend instead of foe. At the last moment, with the loop touching his head, Sin-Killer hunched his great shoulders, lunged off the horse, rolled almost into the fire, and came up with the branding iron in his hand.

The Ensleys were milling together, too close for quick gunplay. That was their fatal mistake.

Slam! The white-hot branding iron caught Tobe Ensley across the face. His scream was followed quickly by an outcry from Obie as Sin-Killer swung with terrific, accurate blows. Then Hank Ensley's skull was cracked wide open by a blow from the iron. A back-handed blow took care of the fourth brother. Ribs and arms snapped like matchsticks under impact of the heavy iron.

Four Ensley brothers were down *two forever, two badly wounded.*

WHAT Sin-Killer did then was something that men of the West will remember and talk about as long as there are men of the West. Sin-Killer could have ridden on home—he could have ridden away.

But he didn't.

He rode straight to the Ensley hangout, knowing there were plenty more Ensley relatives, and having a good idea what they might do to him.

Steve Ensley, father of the four boys, was on the ranch-house gallery as the preacher rode up. Sin-Killer said, "We had a mite of trouble. I done killed Tobe and Hank. Obie and Steve, Jr., they're back there a piece hurt bad."

The grim-faced ranchman said nothing. He leaned forward, his hard gaze on the preacher's face. Sin-Killer told the story, exactly as it happened. When he finished Steve Ensley said, "You stay here," and rode away to his sons.

A half hour later the living and the dead Ensley boys were brought back to the ranch house. Steve Ensley, Sr. beckoned the preacher, who had been patiently waiting, even though he still could have ridden away.

"It wasn't in no way your fault," Steve Ensley said. "Bed down here until *tomorrow*, after you've had supper. And remember, I don't blame you none."

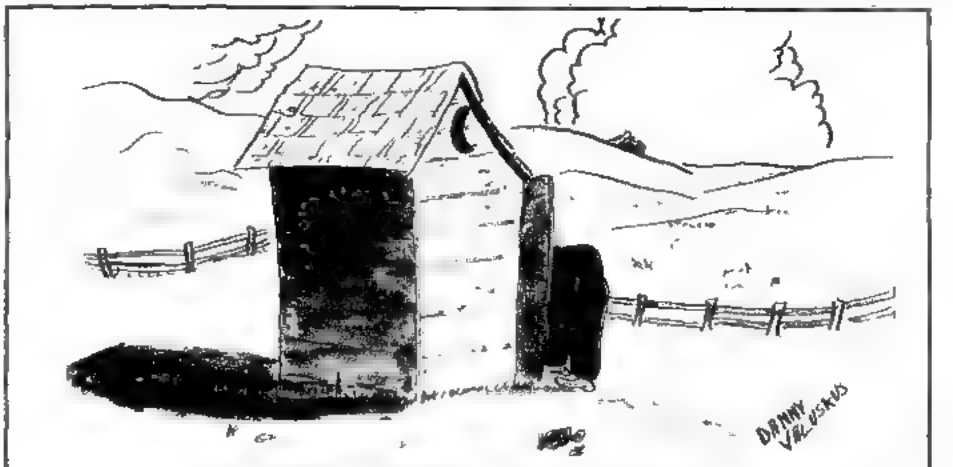
Sin-Killer slept soundly, had a good breakfast the next morning, and rode away. But before he rode away he stood over the two newly-dug graves and delivered a powerful funeral oration—over the bodies of the two men he had killed.

He was that kind of man, Sin-Killer was. There weren't any others like him

Ostrich Stampede

(Continued from page 26)

and it wasn't long till they started going by. What did I see but Smokey riding one of the biggest ostriches in the bunch. He was riding him from his ears to his tail. When he saw me, he let



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out a warwhoop, jerked out his old forty-five, emptied it in the air, and raked old Mr. Bird from his breast to his tail with his magrouters. Several dollars worth of plumes went sailing through the air.

That old bird was going home! Smokey's hair was standing straight up in the wind, his shirt tail waving like a flag. He had a handful of ostrich neck in one hand, and a wing in the other. Old Cyclone jumped the irrigation ditch and left Smokey in the water. Smokey came out, pawing his head and spouting water like a whale.

What a day! We were both peeled up and bruised a little. An ostrich can outkick any mule that ever walked on four feet. Smokey thought we were in one hell of a mess, and I agreed with him. We decided the farmer couldn't any more than hang us, so we went back to my horse, who was scared and still tangled up in the bridle reins. We could see Smokey's horse in the lower end of the field with the ostrich. Smokey took my horse to ride after his, and see what had become of the rest of the bunch. I hi-tailed it over to the wagon to see what was the matter. There was a crowd, looking things over. The teamster who was on the wagon that turned over was sitting down, holding his head, and talking to himself. The other one was O. K. He'd run back to his pal's rescue and found him buried in the hay with just his feet sticking out. He had pulled him out just in time. The man was nearly smothered.

The three of us agreed that the birds were to blame. That helped some. Smokey came back with his horse, and we gathered up what we could find of our kitchen outfit. The pack saddle was about all that was left.

We found our horses in a man's alfalfa field, helping themselves. The horse that got astraddle of the wagon tongue was the only one missing. We went back to Five Points to take a new start. We trailed our horse that messed up the deal into the mountains north of Congress. So we scratched him off our list and went back to Phoenix, and out to the ostrich farm. Everything was hunky-dory. They said it was the ostriches' long suit to stampede stock that came along that road, so the farmer didn't blame us.

Jim Bridger—King of Mountain Men

(Continued from page 7)

"Hard doin's" for old Jim, no doubt about that. Sorely he missed the good companions of his youth, the lusty comrades of years long gone. Kit Carson and most of the old Mountain Men were dead. The few remaining *hivernants* were holed up like himself, impatiently waiting for Death to release them to prowl new country beyond the horizon. But Death was maddeningly slow in coming for Jim.

Kindly neighbors dropped in on the lonely old man now and then, and Jim would lay aside his long pipe and spin again his oft-told yarns of a picturesque life as foreign to these placid Missouri farmers as life on the moon—Rendezvous on the Green River, the "place whar Hell bubbled up" in Yellowstone Park, his "follerin' o' the North Star" to the very rim of the Artic Ocean. Invariably Jim wound up his yarns with the firm declaration: "Ef I waren't sick and blind, I'd

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still be out thar—a-prowlin' the fur peaks and hidden valleys, same as allus!"

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One breathlessly hot evening in July of 1881, Virginia came home from a neighborhood errand to find her father standing in the open kitchen doorway with his sightless eyes turned toward the glowing West. Somehow the enfeebled old man had dragged himself from his bed to the doorway, and now he was trembling violently and clinging to the door-frame to hold himself erect.

Virginia rushed to him in quick alarm: "Father, what's the matter—what is it?"

He turned to her, smiling, and spoke with surprising vigor in the stately Shoshone tongue: "Do not be frightened, my daughter. The Mighty One Above has called me—I go soon to his faraway Spirit Land beyond the sunset. I am ready!"

Within the week Jim Bridger was dead.

Smokey Joe

(Continued from page 22)

weeks later this third member of the group was drowned while crossing the river. That ends that tale.

My pard Tom knew both Charley Russell and his side pardner, Con Price. This Con was the beatenest broncstomper in all the West. It was said he could ride anything with hair on it. Russell was different from Con when it came to hosses. He wanted them gentle. He liked to paint outlaws, of course. Charley knew hosses, but he got fooled on a hoss trade one time.

A stranger came across the range leading an extra fine-looking hoss. Charley fell for this animal hard. He bought that hoss. But he could never ride the outlaw. The hoss acted like a killer. He was vicious, really dangerous.

Charley immediately thought of his friend Con Price. Con was riding for the Bear Paw outfit in the mountains now and Charley was with the Milk River outfit in the Judith basin. They only met once a year at the Annual Round-up. But Charley heard that Con had just got married, so he sent the hoss over as a wedding present.

Charley didn't see Con until 'way late next fall. Con pulled him over to the side and said, "Charley, if I ever get married again, and you are anywhere in the country, don't send me any more wedding presents! If you do, *old Pard*, you're going to get an awful lot of flowers! Savvy?"

And like most of the old timers' rambling accounts of life in the old days, this one ends abruptly. "No use to taper off to a drivel," Smokey Joe used to say. "When you run out of something to say, shut up!"

Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 23)

Not until after Ab passed on did Lon admit to his wife, Laura, that it was he who had pulled that trick on the biggest tightwad in the Cherokee Nation.

Considerate Judge

The first public hanging in Texas was the execution of John C. Quick and David Jones. From all accounts it was some event.

One hundred and forty deputies escorted the two prisoners to the gallows. According to an eye witness, "a concourse of some 2,000 persons viewed the hanging without a tear being shed."

The judge who pronounced the death sentence did so in typical early western fashion.

"The court intended to confine you to prison only," His Honor told the prisoners, "but the jail is in such bad condition, and prisoners can be allowed only one blanket each, so to sleep soundly would be out of the question. In consideration of these circumstances, and wishing to lessen your suffering as much as possible, the Court, in humanity and compassion, orders you to be executed tomorrow morning, as soon after breakfast as may be convenient to the sheriff and agreeable to you."

Tough Hombre

An almanac published in 1843 shows that on this early date the exploits of western fighting men were being slightly exaggerated.

According to Fisher's Almanac, Davey Crockett had not been slain in the Alamo; he had been shot by a silver bullet which left no wound. But the real he-man of the Crockett family, stated the Almanac, was Davey's uncle.

"Whoa, I said!"

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HOW'S YOUR HORSE SENSE?

By JOSEPH C. STACEY

Can you match them up—the names and terms pertaining to horses (in one way or another)—with the brief descriptions and/or explanations of each? Eight correct answers is passing; nine to eleven is good; twelve to thirteen excellent.

_____ 1. PRICKING
_____ 2. STAR
_____ 3. THILL
_____ 4. PANNIER
_____ 5. WEB
_____ 6. TILPAH
_____ 7. ROWEL
_____ 8. PILCH
_____ 9. LATIGO
_____ 10. BRAKE
_____ 11. TANDEM
_____ 12. CURRY
_____ 13. FROG

(a) a saddle blanket.
(b) a saddle-strap.
(c) the triangular prominence in the sole of a horse's foot.
(d) the laming of a horse by improper shoeing.
(e) a small wheel on spurs having a number of radiating sharp points.
(f) a framework to hold a horse's foot while it is being shod.
(g) to groom a horse.
(h) one of the shafts of a vehicle between which a horse is harnessed.
(i) driving one horse in front of the other.
(j) the rim of a horseshoe.
(k) a light saddle.
(l) a basket for carrying a load on the back of a horse, burro, etc.
(m) a white spot on a horse's forehead.

ANSWERS
1-d, 2-m, 3-h, 4-l, 5-j, 6-a, 7-e, 8-k, 9-b, 10-f, 11-i, 12-g, 13-c.
REFERENCE SOURCE: Funk & Wagnalls' Practical Standard Dictionary.

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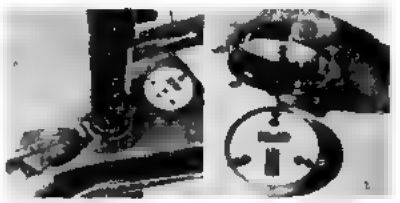

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

OUTLAWS AND GUNMEN

American Murder Ballads and Their Stories (Oxford, $5.50) as collected and edited by Olive Woolley Burt is the first real attempt to bring together the folklore of murder as revealed by ballads, many of which were composed at the time of the crime. This book covers the whole area of this country and just about the entire period of our history and, of course, the West gets full coverage (Mrs. Burt is a Westerner—a newspaper columnist in Salt Lake City). Ballads about Sam Bass, Jesse James, Joaquin Murieta, Three-Fingered Jack, Wild Bill Hickok and Billy the Kid and their violent deaths are among the better-known included.

But the local murders in the West that inspired the local ballads are here in considerable number—from such locations as Bottineau County, North Dakota; Douglas Bar, Idaho; Kanab, Utah; Hangtown, California and Johnson County, Wyoming. The Johnson County ballads are "The Invasion Song" and "The Blood-Stained Diary" and both, of course, are about the famous range war. The Mormon ballads, and there are several, lament their persecution and the martyrdom of their leaders.

The compilation of this book required a terrific amount of research and perseverance on the part of the author. And she did a job!

James D. Horan's *The Wild Bunch* (Signet, 35c) is the first printing of a new account of the notorious outlaws Butch Cassidy, Kid Curry, Matt Warner, The Sundance Kid, The Tall Texan (Ben Kilpatrick) and their gang. Their story has been told several times but Jim Horan is sharp on the trail and he uncovered some new source material while working on *Desperate Men* (1949) that made the writing of this book a must. *Desperate Men* also opened some other doors for Jim—and resulted in interviews and written reminiscences and the use of some old letters that freshen up the saga of *The Wild Bunch*. Well-done and a whopping bargain.

Ernest W. Fletcher just about tells it all in his autobiography, *The Wayward Horseman* (Sage, $3.75). He does not make excuses for his wild days on the plains or any of his wayward acts. And he frankly tells the story of his days in prison for cow stealing and just as frankly of his troubles with his first wife. This is a refreshing book, competently edited and annotated by Forbes Parkhill—don't miss it.

H. H. Hoover's *Early Days in the Mogollons* (Texas Western Press, $3) bears the subtitle "Tales from the Bloated Goat." The Bloated Goat was a bar in Mogollon (Muggy-yon), New Mexico, where the old-timers gathered to yarn about early days. Hoover arrived in the Mogollons in 1904 and for fifty years kept a diary. The daily entries were of much value to Hoover in preparing this record of pioneer days in Mogollon, Cooney, and Alma. In addition to the stories of life in the mining camps there is a section on "Days of Death and Violence" that is down to earth on outlaw doings. The book was edited and annotated by Francis L. Fugate of El Paso and there are some good photos and a map, plus a delightful drawing of "The Bloated Goat." Carl Hertzog heads the Texas Western Press and this book was designed and produced by him. If you feel that you want a more permanent binding there is limited edition of 75 cloth-bound copies at $6. The usual fine Hertzog typography and a small edition will make this a collector's "want" within months.

THE BLOODLESS WAR

The Utah Expedition 1857-1858 (Clark, $9.50) edited by LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen is a documentary account of the U. S. military campaign under Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, and resistance by Brigham Young and the Mormon Nauvoo Legion. The Hafens have presented the first complete account of this singular episode through selected, contemporary writings by many who observed and participated in the campaign, later to be known as Buchanan's Folly.

Due to tainted reports received by President Buchanan about Brigham Young and his Mormon theocracy, the President secretly sent under military escort Alfred Cummings as new civil governor of Utah to replace Governor Young.

Word of this strategy leaked through to returning Mormon missionaries. They sped the word quickly to Brigham Young who soon mobilized the fighting Mormons for action.

The advancing army was beset with all manner of tribulations from the start. General Harney, who was to head the expedition, finally was detailed to remain in charge of troops in "bleeding Kansas" and the Utah Expedition started out under the command of Col. E. B. Alexander, referred to as the "Old Woman" by one of his ambitious young officers, Jesse Gove. General Albert Sidney Johnston, an extremely able officer, was finally put in command, but by the time he caught up with his army, he found it bogged down in mud and snow near the Green River, in Wyoming. Thousands of oxen and horses were dead or starving, and badly needed supplies for soldiers had been lost to raiding Mormons under Lot Smith.

Through the admirable services of volunteer conciliator Thomas L. Kane, the Mormons accepted Cummings as governor, Buchanan granted amnesty to the Mormons and a bloody conflict was averted.

Sentiment and prejudice have colored much of what has been written of this historical event by writers who leaned to one side or the other. Therefore, it is refreshing to find both sides of the story presented by those who had a part in this affair. This is another triumph in historical reporting for the Hafens.

NOT SO BLOODLESS!

Joe DeBarthe's *Life and Adventures of Frank Grouard* (University of Okla-

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homa Press, $5) is a reprint of a book first published in 1894 that has become very scarce and expensive. There is a good introduction by Edgar I. Stewart, historian, and author of *Custer's Luck* and other western books. The reader will find this edition a lot easier to read than the first since Stewart's editing has eliminated much of the padding that diverted attention from Grouard's story of his life with the Sioux and later as one of the best-known and highly trusted army scouts during the Indian Wars. Maybe Frank stretched the blanket a little with the help of his biographer, a newspaper man. However, his account of his deeds has been substantially verified by the various army officers with whom he served—this is high adventure, indeed.

John C. Ewers' *The Blackfeet* (University of Oklahoma Press, $5.75) is the definitive history of this great tribe—it covers the period from their primitive, foot days of the early 1700's through their boom, horse days as buffalo hunters. Jack Ewers, now of the Smithsonian staff in Washington, was the first curator of the Museum of the Plains Indian on the Blackfoot Reservation and has been one of the most persistent chroniclers of Blackfeet culture. He won the confidence of many of the elders of the tribe while he was at the Indian Museum and collected first-hand much of the information on the latter years of the tribe's saga. Jack reveals that the Blackfeet were among the first of the buffalo hide hunters—years ahead in fact of the white hunters who nearly exterminated the buffalo after the Civil War. The Blackfeet did not like the Americans and were a barrier to white settlers in Montana for many years. They were a war-loving people and after driving their Indian enemies out of their country they firmly resisted the advancing white settlers until the numbers overwhelmed them. Too few buffalo and too many white men wrote the end of the old way of life for the Blackfeet. Now they raise cattle, work in industry, go to college. This is a worthy addition to the Civilization of the American Indian Series of the University of Oklahoma Press—it is the 49th volume in the project and among the very best of the long collection.

WESTERNERS ALL

Pawnee Bill (University of New Mexico Press, $5) by Glenn Shirley, is a biography of Major W. Little, white chief of the Pawnees, wildwest showman, last of the land boomers, cowboy, lawman, buffalo hunter, teacher, trapper and dime novel hero.

"He's dead."

While Pawnee Bill never achieved the public acclaim given Buffalo Bill, he cut an enviable swath of his *own* and his achievements were far more noteworthy than those of the mercurial Wm. F. Cody. Rivals in wildwest shows for years, the two shows eventually were joined and the two famous Bills became partners. In fact, Pawnee Bill saved Buffalo Bill's show from bankruptcy. The two men were so incompatible that Pawnee Bill bought out Cody. Pawnee Bill finally was forced into bankruptcy due to civil altercations with Tammen and Bonfils, owners of the rival Sells-Floto circus and the powerful *Denver Post*. Following the bankruptcy sale, Pawnee Bill returned to Pawnee, Oklahoma, with a trunk and his saddle—all that he saved from his show. Here Pawnee made another start by establishing the colorful Old Town Trading Post, a replica of those common on the old frontier. Pawnee died February 3, 1942, at a time when the ranch residents prepared to celebrate his eighty-second birthday.

Much of the success of the new book, *Recollections of Early Texas* (University of Texas Press, $5) is due to the scholarly editing of the John Holland Jenkins Memoirs by his fifteen-year-old grandson, John Holmes Holland, III. Originally published in the *Bastrop Advertiser*, at intervals from 1884 to 1889, the memoirs provide vigorous accounts of the period when Texans fought for freedom from Mexico. The historical value of the book lies to a large extent in the fresh sidelights it presents on events like the Mier Expedition, Texas Ranger campaigns and the fierce feud between Ed Burleson and Sam Houston.

John Holland Jenkins lost his stepfather in the siege of the Alamo. He enlisted in the Texas Army at the age of 13, but missed the Battle of San Jacinto only because his commanding officer detailed him to escort his mother and family safely beyond reach of the invading Mexican army.

The young editor has developed informative biographical notes about the key people referred to in his grandfather's memoirs. And there is an entertaining foreword by J. Frank Dobie.

Calamity Jane of the Western Trails (privately printed by the author, 420 West McCabe, Mitchell, South Dakota, $1) by Leonard Jennewein is back in print. The first edition (1953) has been OP for three years. Jennewein, who teaches history at Dakota Wesleyan University, did an excellent research job on "Calam" and as a result was able to separate the legends from the facts. His booklet is widely used as source material by other writers. There is an excellent bibliography and some good photographs—worth the money

"Half Bear—Half Man!"

(Continued from page 9)

"Nope, they seen the gun." He backed farther into the grove, still clutching the nugget and the knife. A fallen tree lay nearby, and Moore crouched behind it, the knife held as steady as his trembling old hand could manage.

"Here they come. Lay low; mebbe they won't see—— ah-h-h-h, you would, would you?"

With a choked gurgle, the old man leaped up and fell back behind the dead tree. He spoke and moved no longer. Down the slope a bear, startled by the sudden noise, moved quickly away.

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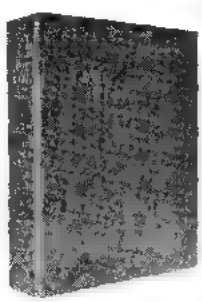

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When the government trapper and his dogs rounded the shoulder of Big Turkey the next spring and found "Bear" Moore's frozen body, he called a coroner's jury of cowboys from the nearby ranches. It was not hard, with their knowledge of the old man, to reconstruct what had happened, just as it is told here.

"He had fixed to hole up under that ledge for all the world like a bear", one of them said later, telling the story. "I reckon he must have got to be like one."

They dug his grave where he lay, in the wild country where he had spent two-thirds of his pathetic life. It was where he would have wished to stay. As they gathered about him, the final irony of his strange, fate-ridden, bear-controlled life became apparent. The government trapper noticed the nugget lying by his left hand, picked it up, and as men will, got out his knife and cut into the soft, heavy mass. Then he peered closely at it, spat on the ground, and swore.

"Lead!" he said.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 31)

name of paper, subject, date, page and column. Cards are filed by subjects; train wrecks, officers, outlaws, murders, fires and storms.

Inquiries should give dates as nearly as possible, to aid in narrowing down the search. Most newspapers were weeklies in the old days, making the task of research relatively easy. Dates are very important for looking up court records.

How about it, Joe and TW folks?—Zoe A. Tilghman, 3130 N. Barnes, Oklahoma City 6, Okla.

Thanks for your letter, Zoe, and, by golly, we'll give it a try—even though we're so cramped for space now it's pitiful! Some day soon, if enough of you folks get behind us, we've just got to publish bigger magazines. The problem, as always, is financing. But if y'all just keep buying TW and FT on the stands and sending in those vital subscriptions, we'll make it—and maybe sooner than you think!

—Joe

Was Old Swede on the Weed?

Dear Sir:

In the October issue of *True West* under the title "World's Weirdest Rodeo" you have printed some of the weirdest batch of fiction I have ever read. Don't know this man Anderson. If he was at this rodeo I don't remember him and he was a very poor observer.

The show was a huge success from start to finish. Over fifty thousand paid admissions the afternoon of the first day, over thirty thousand that night. Your article said Tex Austen received a chilly reception. Bah! Furthermore, Austen wasn't out any money taking the over two hundred contestants and over two hundred fifty horses and cattle to England.

Charles B. Cochran, a big sports promotor and theater owner in England, paid all expenses and gave Tex a $25,000 guarantee plus a percentage of the net. According to the English newspapers, the show netted $339,000. Mr. Cochran's personal representative told me at the first show, after looking over the huge crowd, that they were assured of success. As to Tex only being able to take up a collection from that crowd of cowboys, how foolish could your man get? That would be less than one dollar per man. Do you think these men were so foolish they would go to England that short on money? Besides, Tex carried a bankroll that would choke a horse . . . Also, there wasn't any such bet made.

Your man has Snowy Thompson—he calls him Cocky Thompson—riding a dun horse called Deerfoot. Deerfoot was about a ¾ thoroughbred and a rich chestnut color. He has Mike Hastings' bulldogging horse called Baldy. He was not a bald-face horse, but a roan horse called Stranger.

As to the language these boys used—well, most of them were high school graduates and some were college men. My buddy over there was a graduate of Texas A and M and a join-up good bronc rider. If there is a paragraph in this article *that is true*, I couldn't detect same.

For your information, the Wembley Stadium seated one hundred twenty-five thousand people. Tex Austen ranched near Las Vegas, New Mexico, died in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I knew him personally, before the London Show and until his death. He was a Jew, raised in New Jersey, and his real name was far from being Austen.—Dewitt Reynolds, 1834 8th Street, Las Vegas, New Mexico.

We appreciate your fine, informative letter, Mr. Reynolds, though we're sorry it apparently riled you so. It is reassuring to know, anyhow, that there was some fact in the yarn; Thompson riding the bronc, Mike Hastings bulldogging a steer, etc. As to Tex Austen being an ex-New Yorker—well, it figures, as we ex-New Yorkers say. I got the yarn from an old cowboy named Ivan (Swede) Anderson, over a cup of coffee at a little restaurant not far from Madison Square Garden about ten years ago. As a struggling writer, I used to haunt the Garden whenever the Rodeo was in town to soak up color and atmosphere for the pulp yarns I was then turning out. Ol' Swede assured me that he had been at the London Show, though he was cagey about admitting in what capacity. He seemed to tell a straight yarn, but—since this was an "as told to" article, I wrote to Fog Horn Clancy, the famous rodeo announcer, for checking. Fog Horn wrote back as follows: "Dear Mr. Wiltsey: Your letter regarding the incidents of the Tex Austen Rodeo in England received, and I am quite sure that you have both incidents correct. I know the one regarding the bulldogging is correct, as I have heard it from Mike Hastings himself many times. Mike is foreman of the Cimarron Dude Ranch, at Peekskill, N.Y., and I am sure can verify both in-

"Wot Eagle! Why you no tell mama?"

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cidents . . . Fog Horn Clancy, Route 1, Waverly, N.Y."

Right off, I sent the carbon copy of the piece to Mike for inspection and criticism, but either the stagecoach carrying the mail got held up and robbed or Mike was out on the range with the dudes when it arrived. Anyhow, I never got an answer—nor, incidentally, the carbon back. We'll attempt again to reach Mike and try to run this yarn down. If and when received, we'll be sure to print his answer.

With no discredit to the performers in Tex Austen's Show, I'd just like to mention that the bronc stompers I talked to at the Garden sure didn't talk like any college men I ever met. Their language was rough and salty and fitted them as perfectly as their handmade boots.

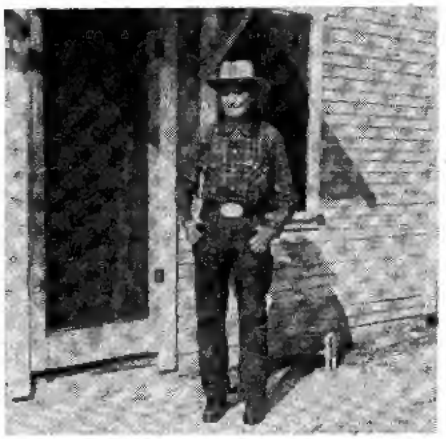
—NBW

"Younger" Old-timers—Arise!

Dear Norm:

If you publish this letter it will probably kick up another ruckus, but here goes, anyway:

You folks are putting out two fine magazines on the Old West in *True West* and *Frontier Times*, but it seems to me that you are neglecting an important segment of Western history in passing up the younger "old-timers" who came along after the gunsmoke days but who still have interesting tales to tell. One such person—George Washington Dalton—passed away on April 18, 1957, at the age of seventy-seven. He was a nephew of the Dalton Boys, cousins of the Jameses and Youngers of outlaw fame.



The last picture made of George W. Dalton, taken by Blanch Lovern.

I knew George at the M-G-M Studios, where he had worked for years. He made good money at M-G-M, but when the big movie strike came along a few years back George went out with the rest. M-G-M blackballed most of the striking workers, and after that George was lucky to get extra work. He even lost out on the pension and knew dire poverty in his last years. He was always a rebel and wouldn't have been happy if he'd kept his job while fellow workers were on strike. He suffered plenty for his independent attitude, but did not complain.

I have written a short article about George, but I suppose it would be considered too modern for the old-timers you cater to. I think you are catering to a dying audience, since these men are eighty years old and more. Each generation is twenty years, and succeeding generations have also led interesting lives in this great big Western land of ours. But Grampaw always has wanted to hog the limelight and spin his yarns over and over again.

On page seven of the September, 1954, *True West*, there is a picture that actually startled me so that I jumped when I first saw it. Not the bullet-riddled Bill Doolin—whom I admire—but William Dalton! I would have sworn that it was George; the resemblance was uncanny.

At that time (1954) George lived across from the studio in a little grey house back of the Palms Theater; surrounded by boxes and barrels of family keepsakes, Texas steer-horns, spurs, bridles, saddles, and a regular arsenal of guns. His favorite was a long-barreled Colt .44, and when he held it in his hand and spun yarns of his outlaw uncles, it didn't take much imagination to see that the wild blood was in him, too. But he kept it well in check. His deceased wife, May, had been a very religious woman and, before her death, has asked George to raise their two children (Mary, eldest girl, and Verlin, only son) as Christians. George did his best and made out pretty well. Bibles downstairs; guns upstairs—that's the way it was with George. His nephews admitted that they were afraid of him.

He was a gentleman of the old school; courtly where women were concerned, but quick to anger when any man tried to take advantage of him. He dressed always in the old-time manner, and wore his hair long and wavy. His face was always clean-shaven. He wrote me many letters in the last years of his life, always closing with the words "Your good Friend, George Dalton." He was indeed that.—Blanch Lovern, P. O. Box 34612, Los Angeles, California.

Early photo of the Dalton family.

Thanks, Blanch, for your interesting letter on the last of the Daltons. Reckon you haven't been reading your True West all through or you'd note that—very occasionally—we do sneak in a modern West yarn. However, the reader poll we conducted some time back ran overwhelmingly in favor of old West articles—and it wasn't all Grampaws requesting it, by cracky! So we concentrate on the old West. Trying to please everybody we'd wind up like the feller who tried to straddle two broncs at once in his first rodeo appearance—and fell flat on his face in the arena. We ain't about to try! Tell you what, though. Send in that piece on old George and we'll consider it. Fair enough?

Dere Angel:

What's all this cryin' an' moanin' about competition goin' on page three of the October issue of TW?

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'Course you got competition! I got it from your own book department on page one. So what? We *all* got it!

Hopalong Abramowitz, of El Rancho Abramowitz in New York City, had it when the city bought two hundred trucks and Hoppy and his hosses was thrown off the garbage collections. Did Hoppy moan? Not he! He put on his best Western outfit and crashed City Hall to see Mayor La Guardia in person. The Little Flower was so impressed by this sterling plainsman's guts and character that he put the hosses back on the job.

Did the Kid from Dry Martini moan when he had to eat a barrel of popcorn, the winter the grub gave out in Boo Gulch. No ma'am! He set right down and composed Boo Gulch Ballads, and won the B.H. Historical Society Award that year.

Did Red Eye Jake moan when he found out the printer omitted Happy Days at Boo Gulch from his Bibliography of American Authors? He did not! He destroyed all the copies, so this great work of litichoor no longer exists.

Did I moan when you hombres stuck my advertisement for treasure maps right under Dr. Harrington's article stating that treasure maps were all fakes? No ma'am—I smiled bravely and strung along with y'all. Just keep the good stuff comin' like the Rose articles on lost mines and treasures, and mebbe I'll sell a-plenty maps. I have been after the facts on them silver bars for two years with no success until you folks and Milton Rose tell all.

Enclosed is a small contribution to the pot, for new subs and back issues. When we bring up the corroded *castelamos* from that sunken Spanish galleon we're working, we will send you more.

Meanwhile, Angel, tell Joe and ye Editor to wipe their tears. The other cheep sheets will out-bawl 'em sooner or later, anyway.—One Shot Bob Nesmith, No. 10 Ship Row (At the Sign of the Foul Anchor), Rye, New York.

That sounds like mighty sensible advice, Bob. "Bellyachin' never got nobody nothin' but a swift kick in the tail," as my hoss-trainin' daddy used to say. Actually, we weren't bellyaching. We were just trying to clarify the records in such a way that you-all wouldn't forget it. See, both magazines picked titles so nearly like ours that thousands of people were buying them—thinking they were getting True West. We'd get the hottest letters! One of them dealt in sex and sensationalism and we'd get eaten out for something we didn't do! Bad enough to get jumped and the hide peeled off your back when you make an honest mistake. But the thing we're talking about is like some cuss kicking the dickens out of a big guy and you getting socked in the jaw by mistake for what he did! Oh, well, one of the magazines has gone out of business already. We believe stronger than ever that the blood, sweat and tears we shed getting at the truth isn't wasted!

A little clean competition never hurt anybody. We repeat: any time a magazine enters the authentic western field with the purpose of raising the standard of western reading as a whole—we'll cooperate with them right down the line.

Some mighty interesting things are going on here at True West right now. Too early to announce them in this issue but maybe next. So long. You'all come.

We Told A Durned Fib!

(Continued from Page 3)

sands who would love these two magazines but just simply don't know about them. Getting even a good product (we hope!) known is a TREMENDOUS job!

GOOD NEWS! We're ADDING SIXTEEN PAGES with the next issue! Now maybe we can get some departments, features, more cartoons, and about SIX EXTRA STORIES in each issue—so maybe you'll really get your quarter's worth from now on!

So long, for now, and A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS 1959 TO YOU ALL!

—Joe.

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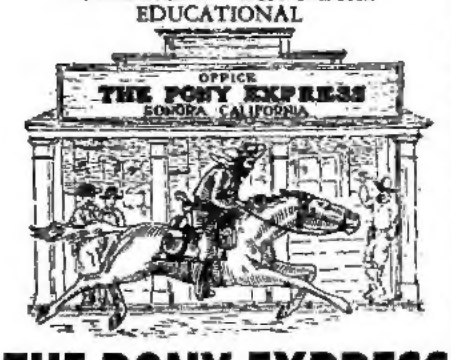

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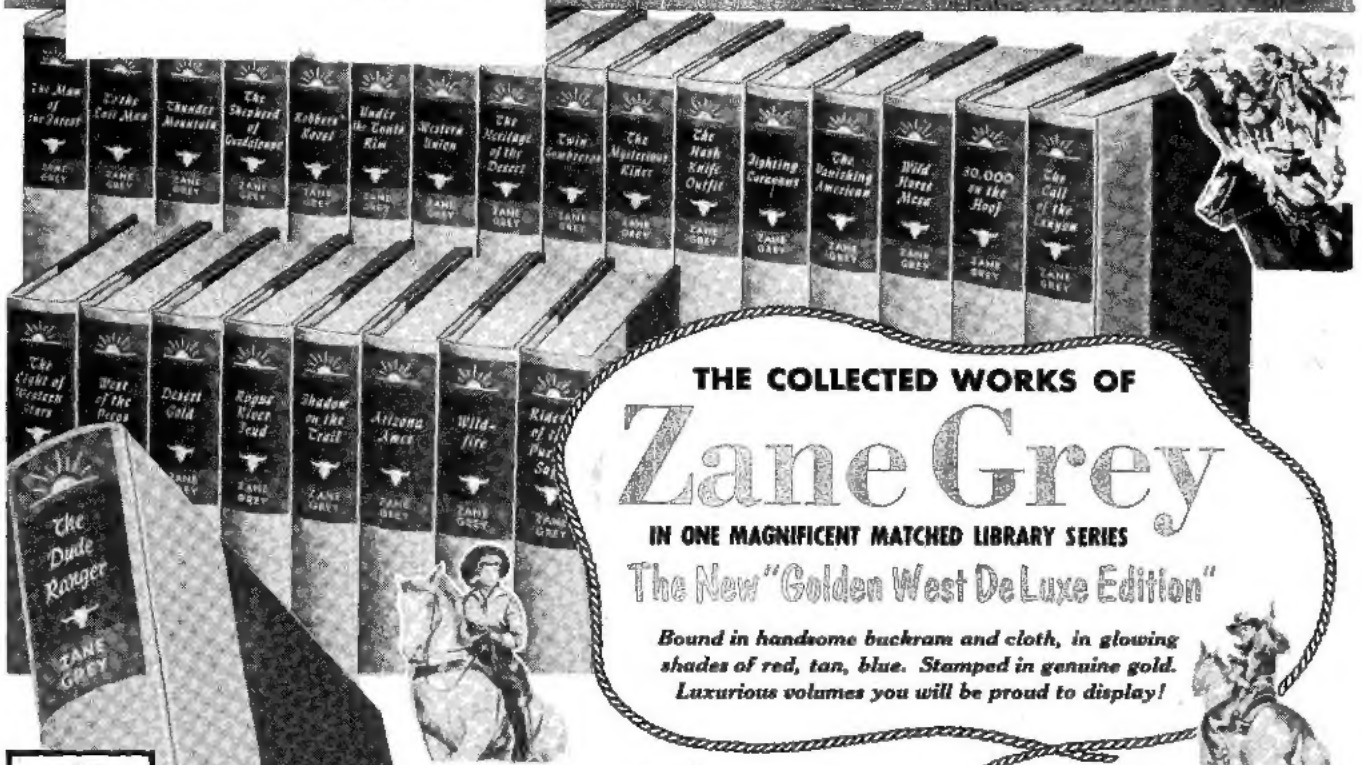

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